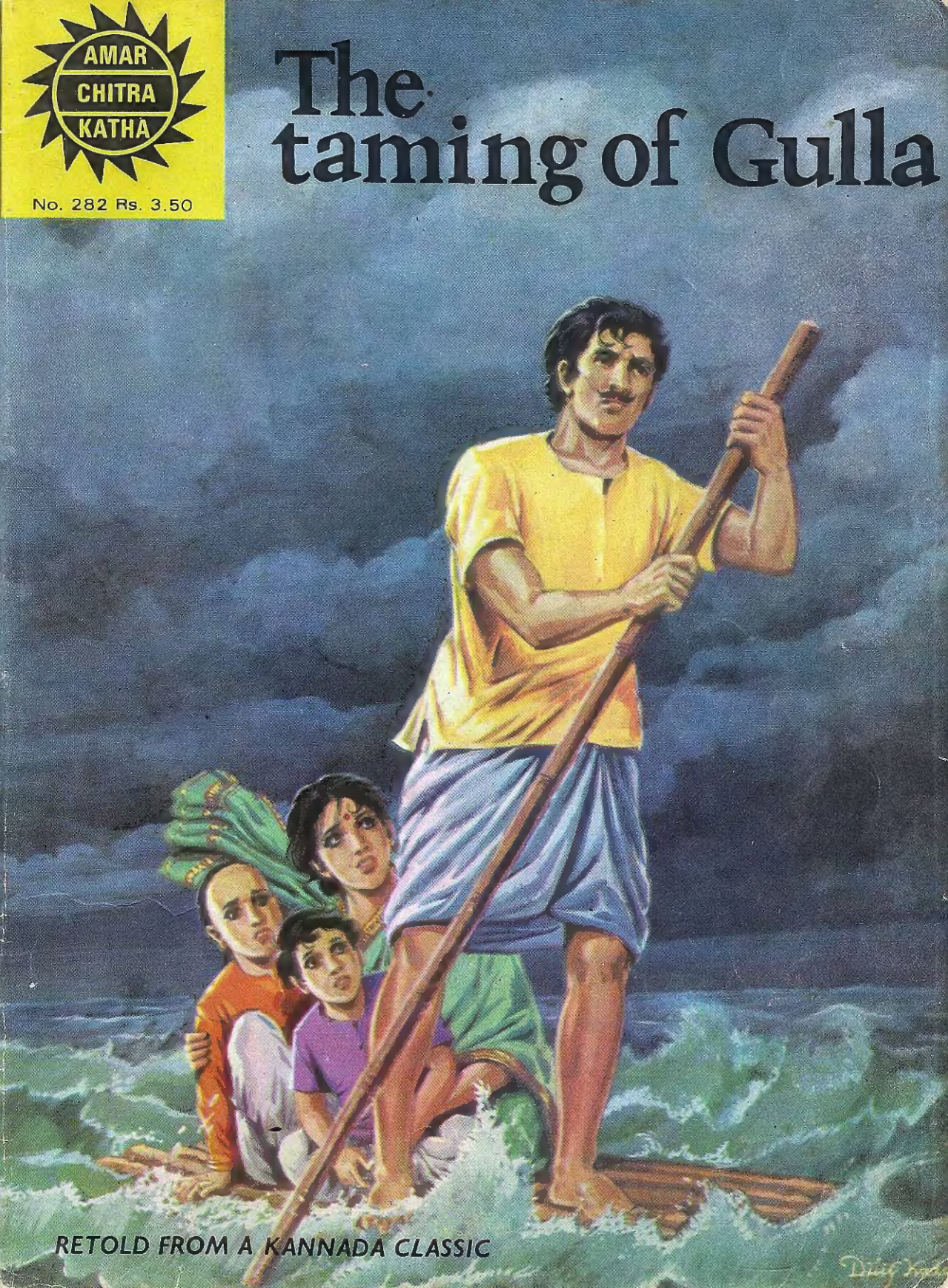
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

No. 282 Rs. 3.50

The taming of Gulla



RETOLD FROM A KANNADA CLASSIC

Where people live, work and play together, be it in the family, the school, the office, the village or the country, there are bound to be differences. The wise ones overcome the differences, learn to give and take and to live in harmony. But not all are wise. So, very often, petty quarrels are blown out of proportion and pursued indefinitely. One party tries to destroy another and eventually both pay a heavy price.

This is the theme of the story retold in this Chitra Katha. It is a true story which took place over sixty years ago. The descendants of Ayyu and Gulla continue to live at Jalahalli.

Sd/-
Gorur Ramaswami Iyengar

Shri Gorur Ramaswami Iyengar (1904-), a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award is a distinguished Kannada author. He has to his credit over fifty works. They include short stories, novels and folklore. This Amar Chitra Katha is an adaptation of 'Bhootayyana Maga Ayyu', which has become something of a classic.

Editor

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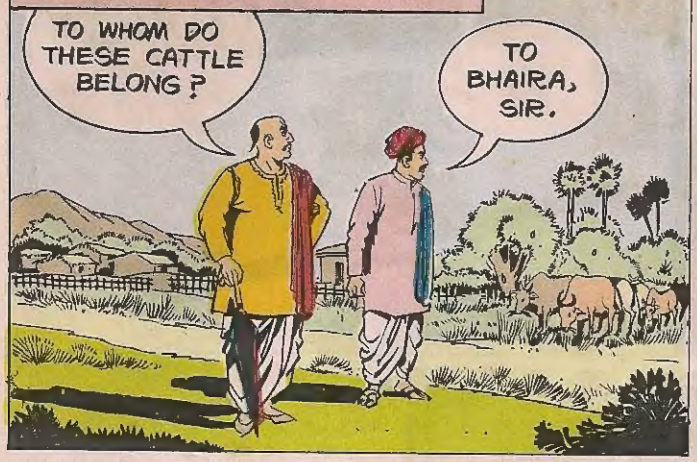
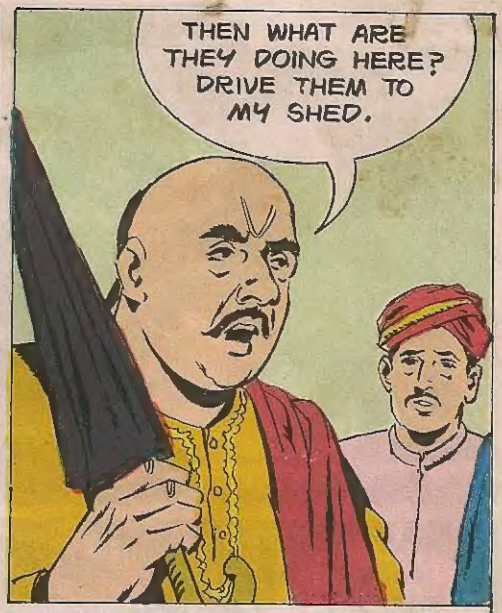
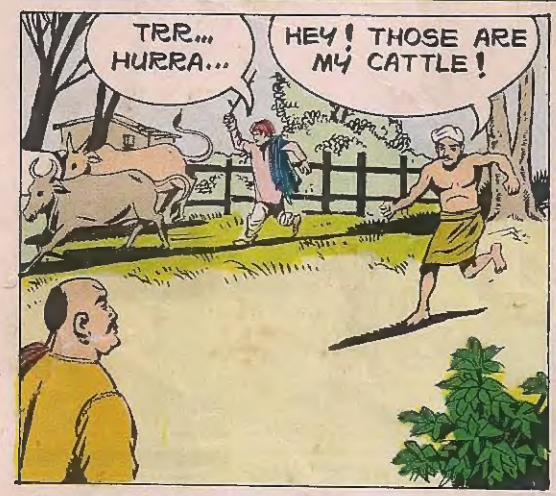
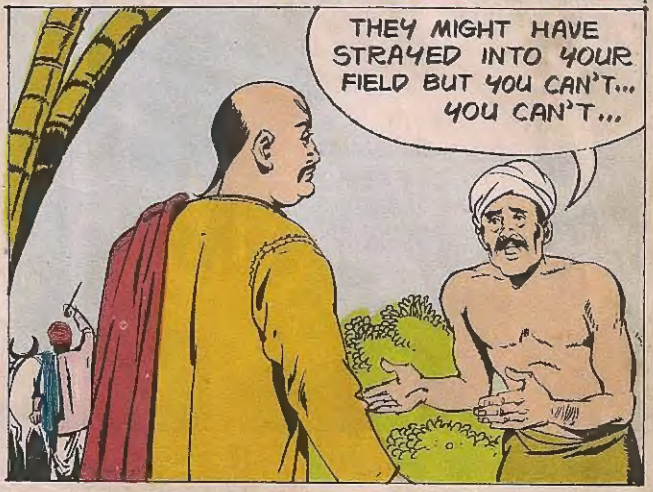
THE TAMING OF GULLA

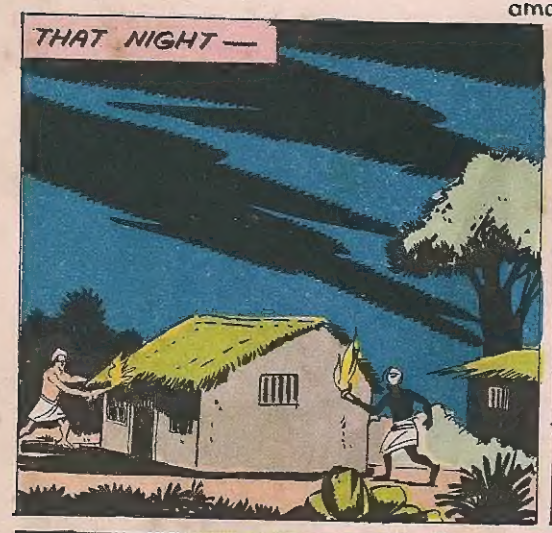
BHOOTAYYA, THE SAHUKAR OF JALAHALLI, WAS A MERCILESS TYRANT.



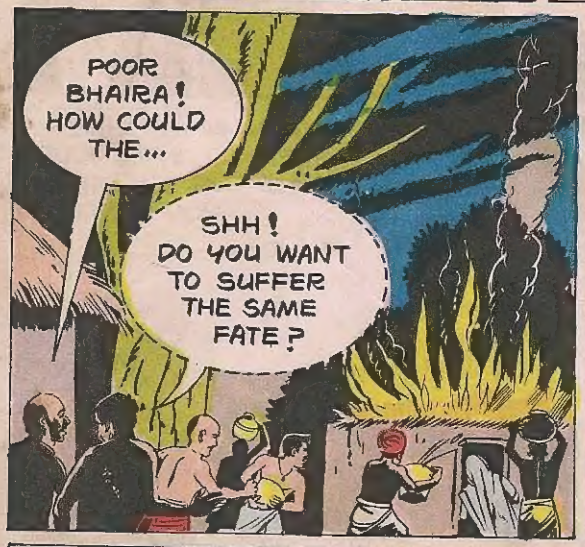


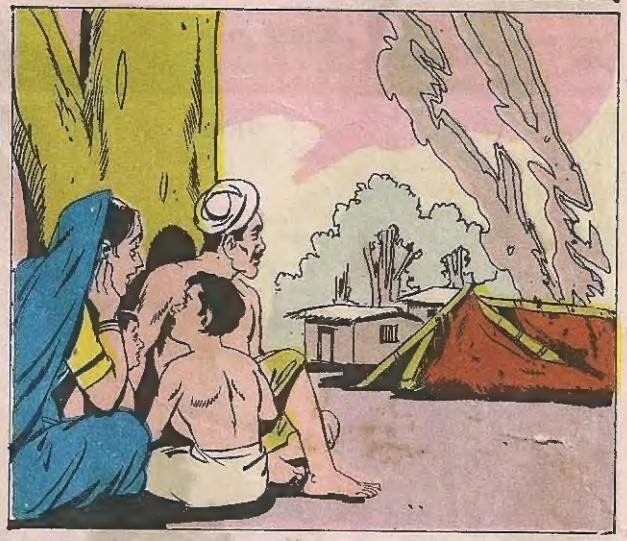





THAT NIGHT—

FIRE! FIRE!

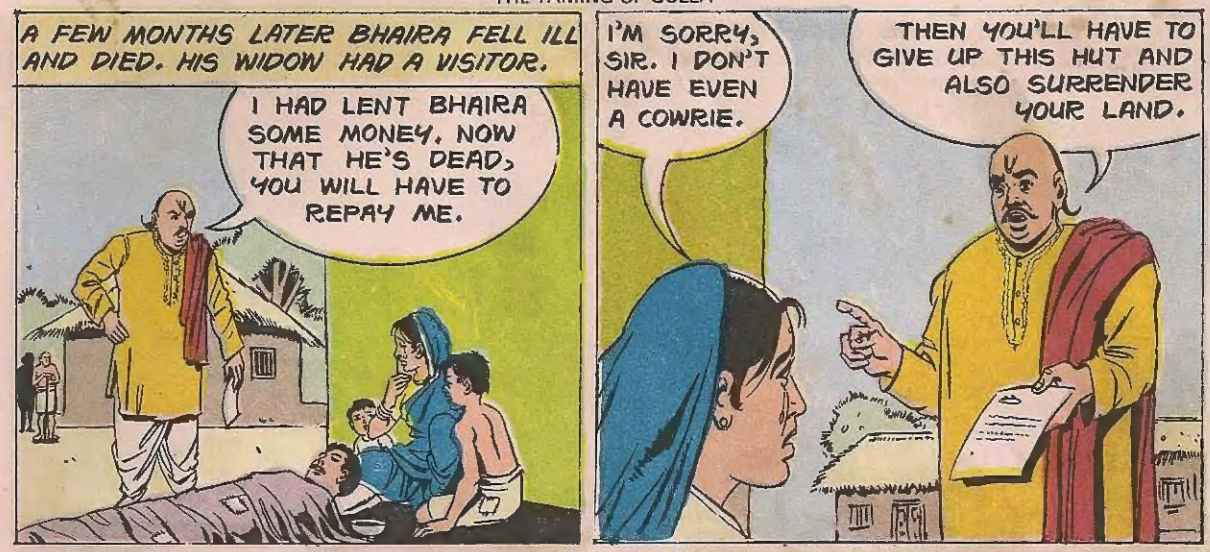

POOR BHAIRA! HOW COULD THE...
SHH! DO YOU WANT TO SUFFER THE SAME FATE?

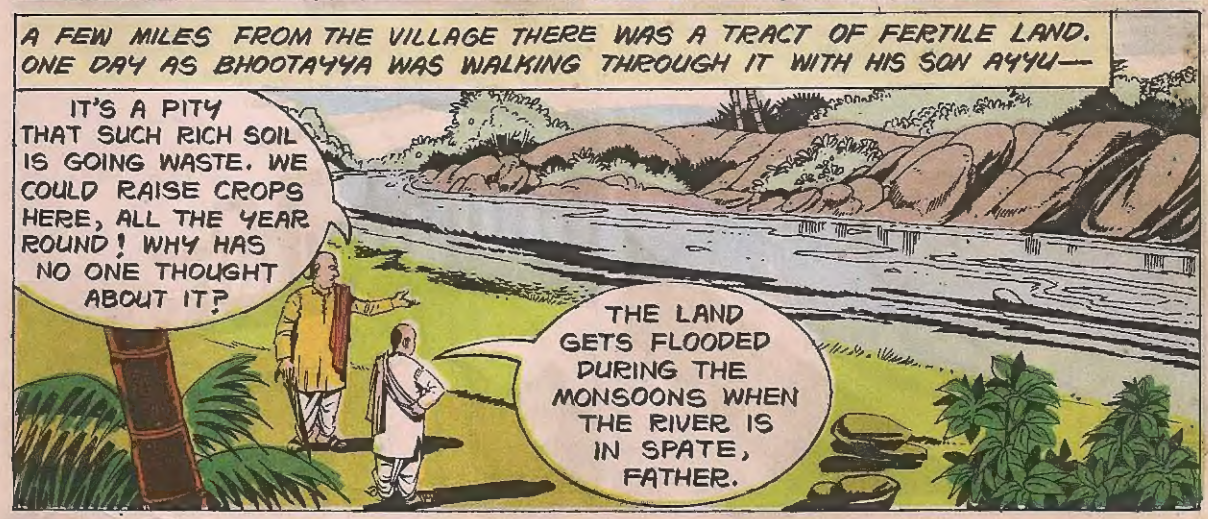


A FEW DAYS LATER—
YES, BHAIRA?
I NEED SOME MONEY. MY WIFE AND CHILDREN ARE STARVING. ONLY YOU CAN SAVE US, SIR.

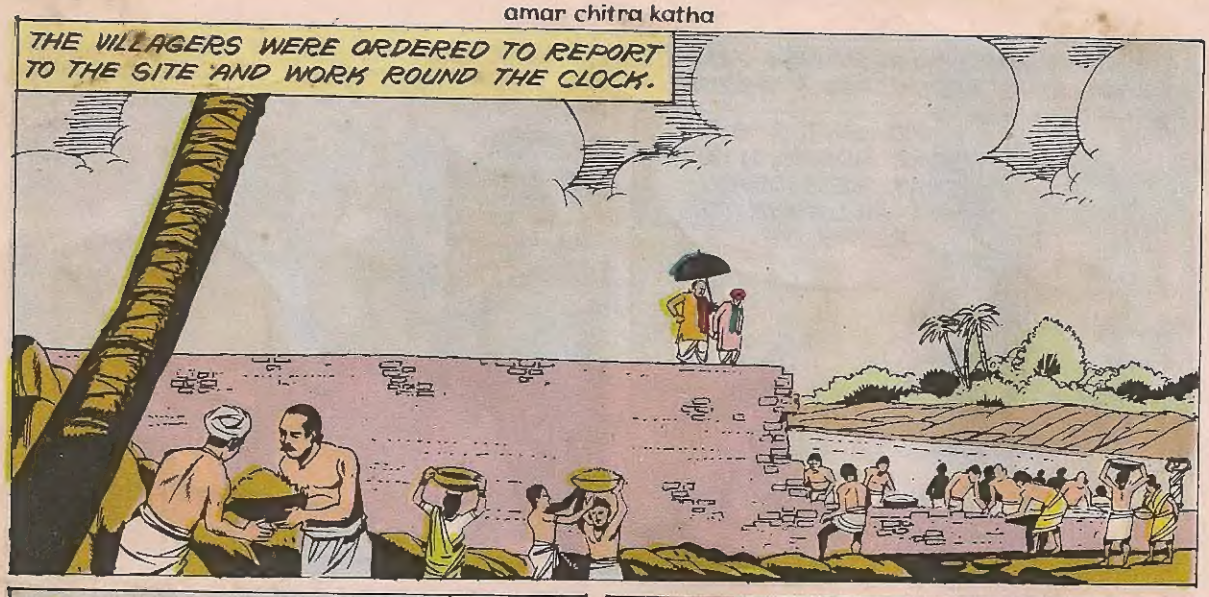
I'LL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED RUPEES. BUT FIRST PUT YOUR THUMB IMPRESSION ON THIS PAPER.

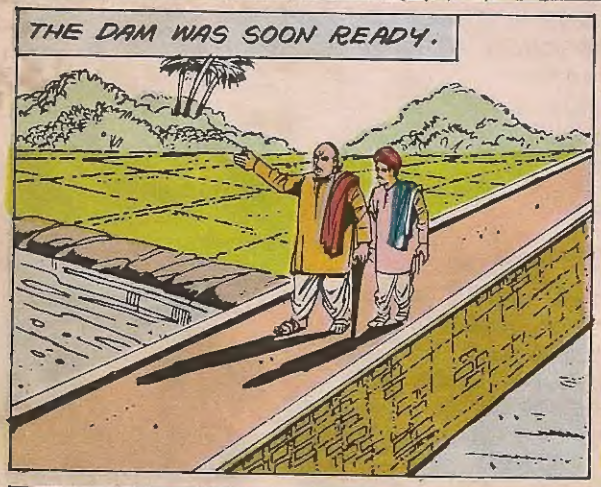
HERE YOU ARE.
THANK YOU, SIR.

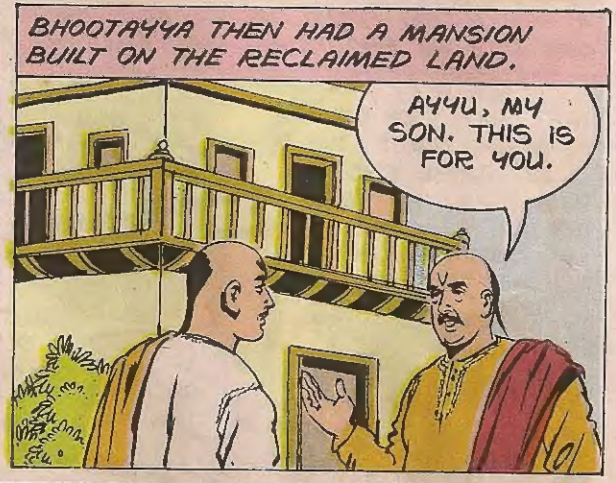

A FEW MONTHS LATER BHAIRA FELL ILL AND DIED. HIS WIDOW HAD A VISITOR.
I HAD LENT BHAIRA SOME MONEY. NOW THAT HE'S DEAD, YOU WILL HAVE TO REPAY ME.
I'M SORRY, SIR. I DON'T HAVE EVEN A COWRIE.
THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE UP THIS HUT AND ALSO SURRENDER YOUR LAND.

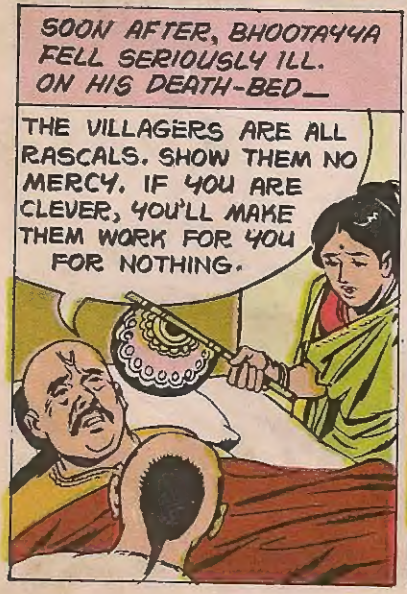

A FEW MILES FROM THE VILLAGE THERE WAS A TRACT OF FERTILE LAND. ONE DAY AS BHOOTAYYA WAS WALKING THROUGH IT WITH HIS SON AYYU—
IT'S A PITY THAT SUCH RICH SOIL IS GOING WASTE. WE COULD RAISE CROPS HERE, ALL THE YEAR ROUND! WHY HAS NO ONE THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
THE LAND GETS FLOODED DURING THE MONSOONS WHEN THE RIVER IS IN SPATE, FATHER.

THAT'S NO EXCUSE. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS BUILD A DAM THERE, AND LABOUR, AS YOU KNOW, COMES FREE.


THE VILLAGERS WERE ORDERED TO REPORT TO THE SITE AND WORK ROUND THE CLOCK.

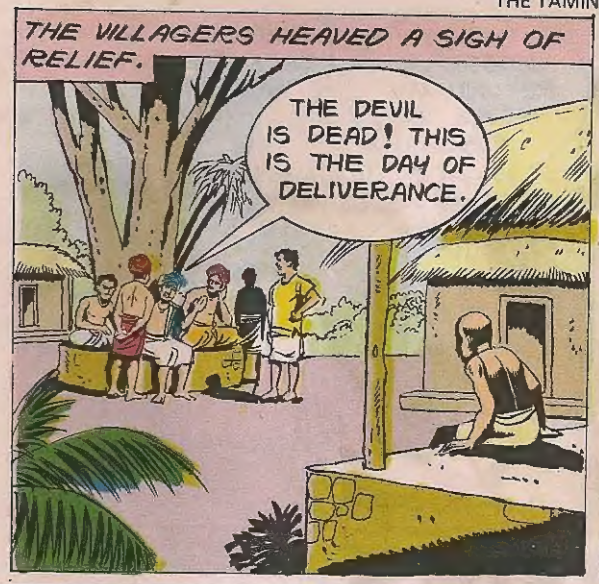

THE DAM WAS SOON READY.


BHOOTAYYA THEN HAD A MANSION BUILT ON THE RECLAIMED LAND.
AYYU, MY SON. THIS IS FOR YOU.

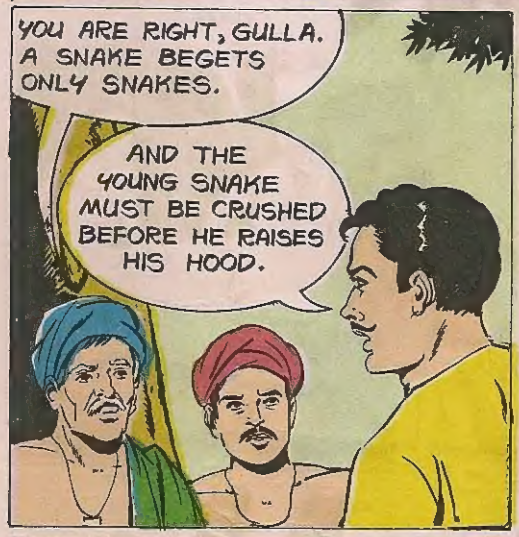

SOON AFTER, BHOOTAYYA FELL SERIOUSLY ILL. ON HIS DEATH-BED—
THE VILLAGERS ARE ALL RASCALS. SHOW THEM NO MERCY. IF YOU ARE CLEVER, YOU'LL MAKE THEM WORK FOR YOU FOR NOTHING.

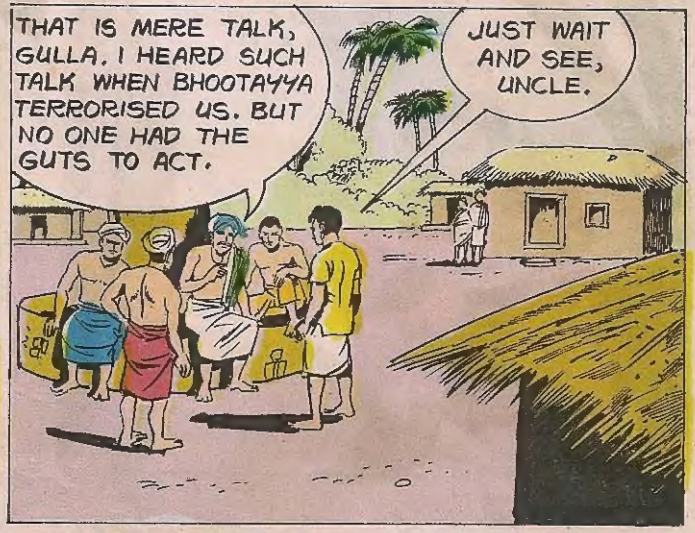
THAT ROGUE KEMPA HAD BORROWED A SPOONFUL OF SALT...
FATHER, PLEASE.

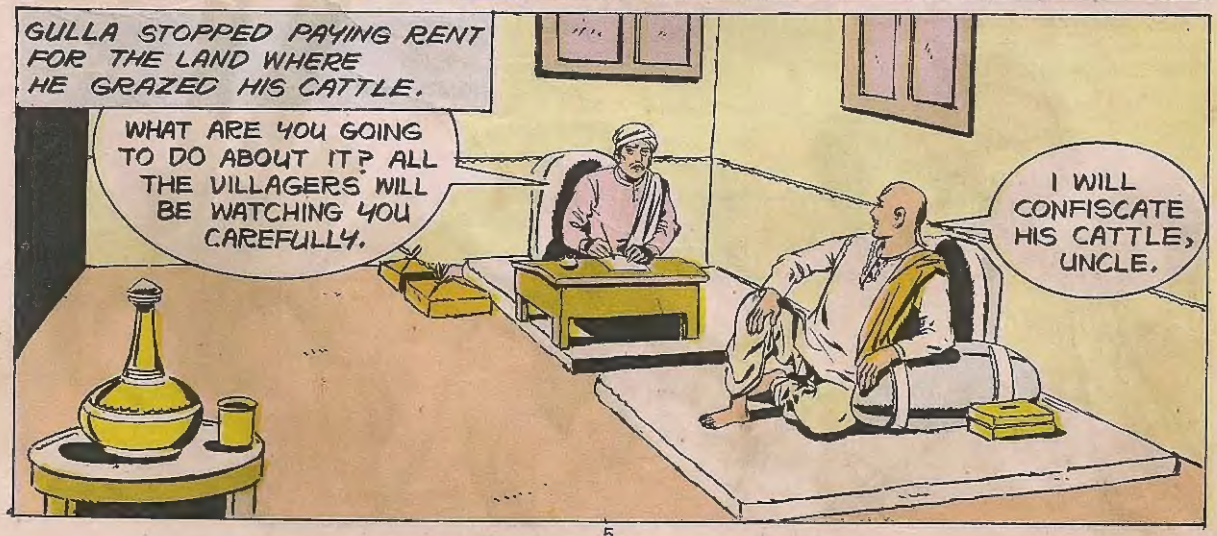
SEE THAT... YOU RECOVER THE... SA... LT...
THOSE WERE THE LAST WORDS OF SAHUKAR BHOOTAYYA.


THE VILLAGERS HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF.
THE DEVIL IS DEAD! THIS IS THE DAY OF DELIVERANCE.

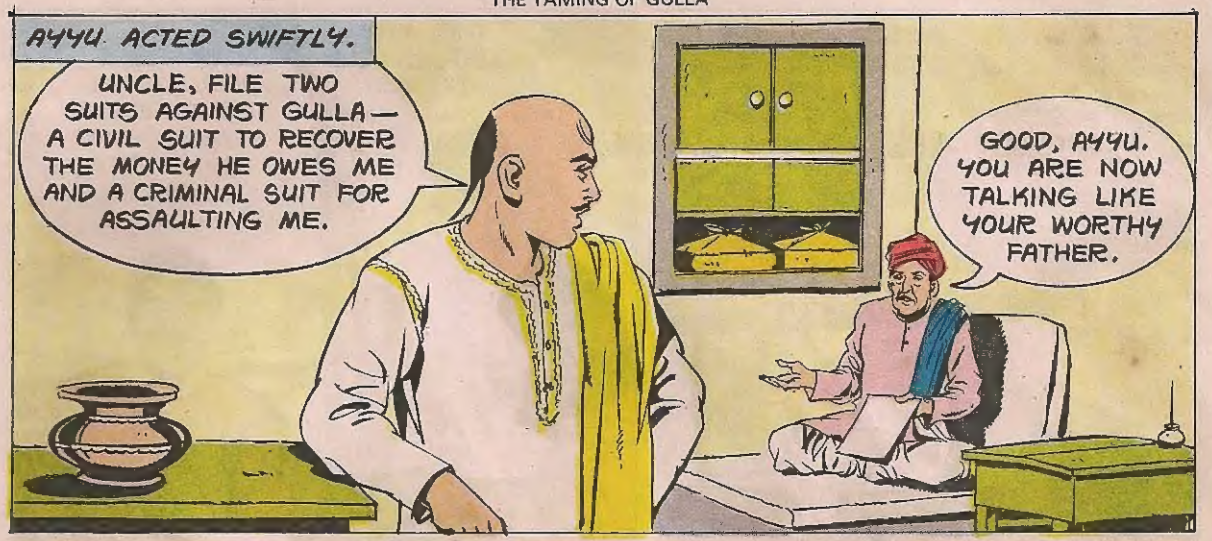
NOT YET, UNCLE. THE DEVIL IS NO DOUBT DEAD. BUT HIS SON IS STILL ALIVE.
THE SPEAKER WAS GULLA, A PROUD YOUNG FARMER.


YOU ARE RIGHT, GULLA. A SNAKE BEGETS ONLY SNAKES.
AND THE YOUNG SNAKE MUST BE CRUSHED BEFORE HE RAISES HIS HOOD.


THAT IS MERE TALK, GULLA. I HEARD SUCH TALK WHEN BHOOTAYYA TERRORISED US. BUT NO ONE HAD THE GUTS TO ACT.
JUST WAIT AND SEE, UNCLE.

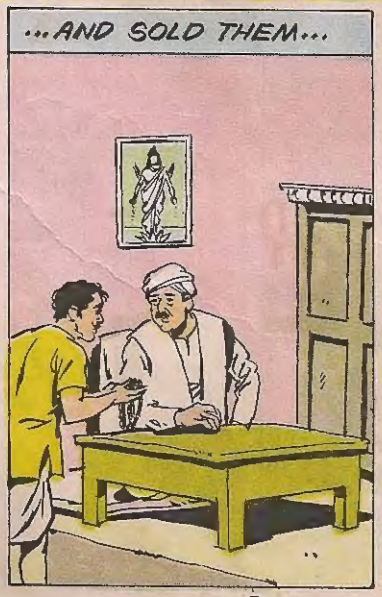

GULLA STOPPED PAYING RENT FOR THE LAND WHERE HE GRAZED HIS CATTLE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? ALL THE VILLAGERS WILL BE WATCHING YOU CAREFULLY.
I WILL CONFISCATE HIS CATTLE, UNCLE.

EVEN AS THE CATTLE WERE BEING DRIVEN AWAY—
AYYU! HOW DARE YOU!
THIS IS ROBBERY. RETURN MY CATTLE OR ELSE...
YOU'LL GET THEM BACK THE MOMENT YOU PAY YOUR DUES.
YOU WANT RENT DO YOU? HERE TAKE IT.
YOU CUR... YOU...
THE VILLAGERS HAD TO SEPARATE THE TWO.
GULLA, YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS.
RUN HOME, KID! RUN!

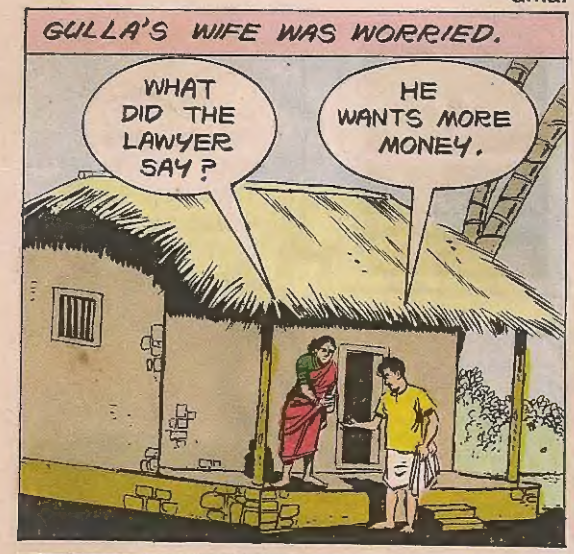

AYYU ACTED SWIFTLY.
UNCLE, FILE TWO SUITS AGAINST GULLA— A CIVIL SUIT TO RECOVER THE MONEY HE OWES ME AND A CRIMINAL SUIT FOR ASSAULTING ME.
GOOD, AYYU. YOU ARE NOW TALKING LIKE YOUR WORTHY FATHER.

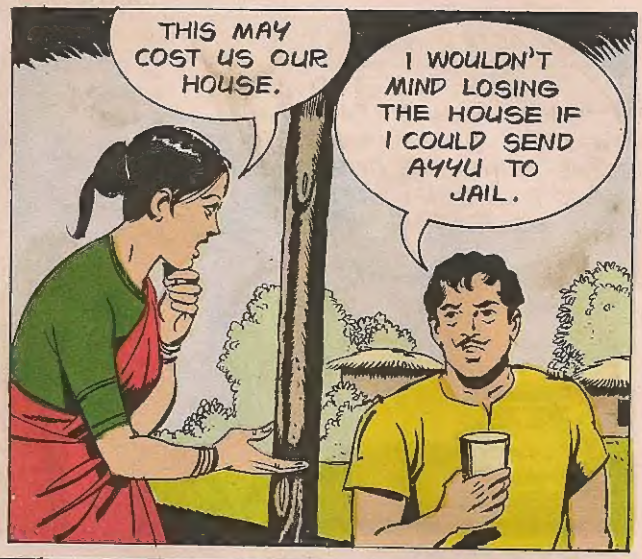
GULLA WENT TO THE CITY AND ENGAGED A LAWYER.
SIR, YOU'LL HAVE TO WIN THIS CASE FOR ME. HERE ARE FIVE HUNDRED RUPEES.
WE'LL CERTAINLY WIN THE CASE. BUT, WE WILL NEED MORE MONEY.

THE CASE DRAGGED ON. GULLA TOOK HIS WIFE'S ORNAMENTS...


...AND SOLD THEM...

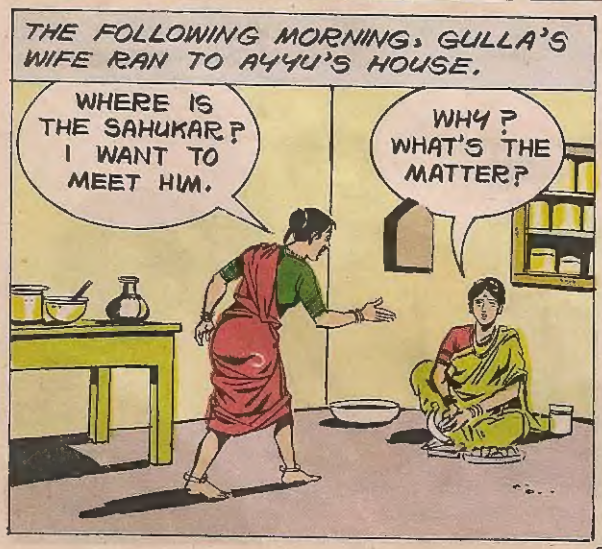
...TO PAY HIS LAWYER.
THIS IS NOT ENOUGH, MY FRIEND. WE NEED MORE... MUCH MORE...

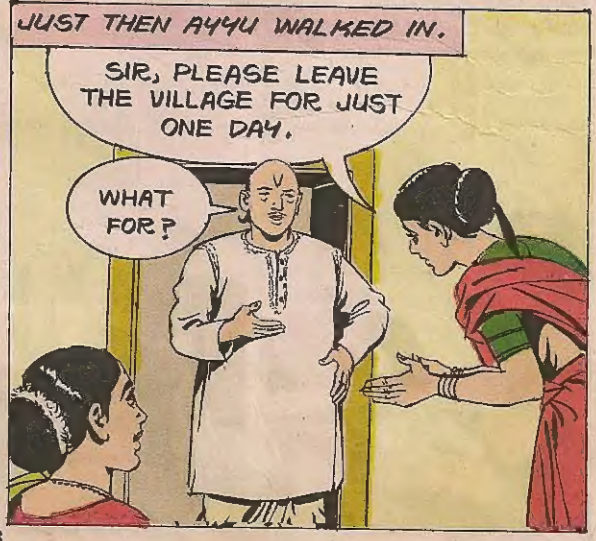

GULLA'S WIFE WAS WORRIED.
WHAT DID THE LAWYER SAY?
HE WANTS MORE MONEY.


THIS MAY COST US OUR HOUSE.
I WOULDN'T MIND LOSING THE HOUSE IF I COULD SEND AYYU TO JAIL.

MEANWHILE AYYU HAD SOUGHT THE COURT'S PERMISSION TO AUCTION GULLA'S HOUSE TO COLLECT HIS DUES. AT GULLA'S HOUSE—
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
CAN'T YOU SEE FOR YOURSELF?

I'LL KILL HIM BEFORE HE AUCTIONS MY HOUSE.
OH, GOD!


THE FOLLOWING MORNING, GULLA'S WIFE RAN TO AYYU'S HOUSE.
WHERE IS THE SAHUKAR? I WANT TO MEET HIM.
WHY? WHAT'S THE MATTER?


JUST THEN AYYU WALKED IN.
SIR, PLEASE LEAVE THE VILLAGE FOR JUST ONE DAY.
WHAT FOR?

YOU SEEM TO BE AFRAID OF SOME THING. WHAT IS IT?

IT... IT'S MY HUSBAND. HE IS... HE WANTS... HE SAYS...

YES? WHAT DOES YOUR HUSBAND SAY?

HE'LL COME HERE... SOON... WITH... WITH A SICKLE...

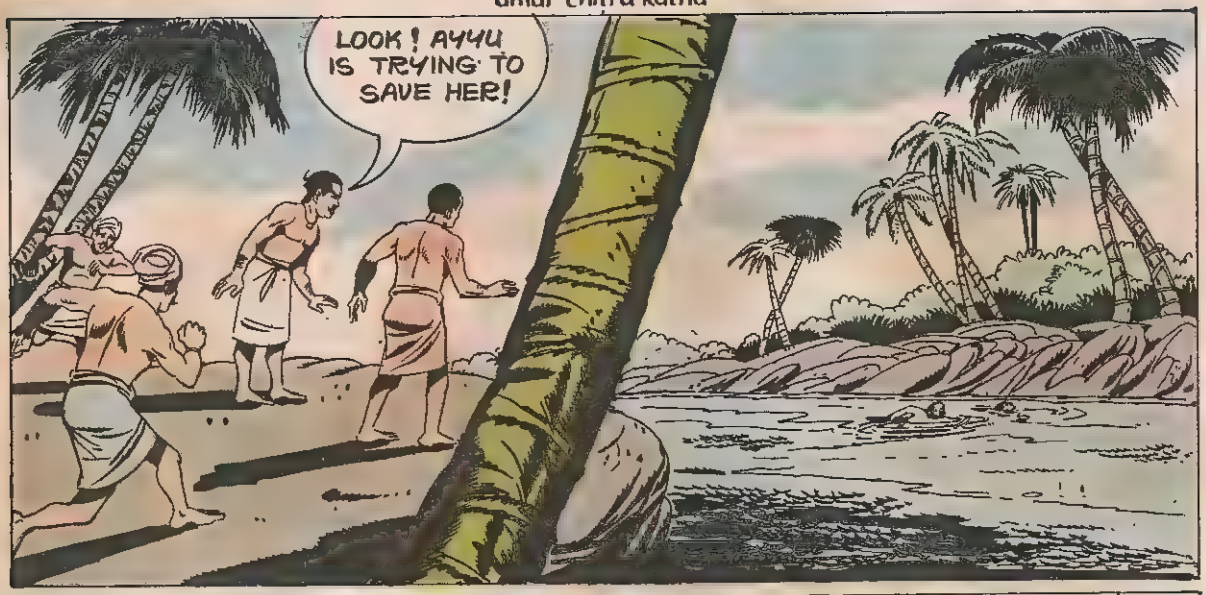
IS THAT ALL? DO YOU SEE THIS? NOW DON'T WORRY. GO HOME.

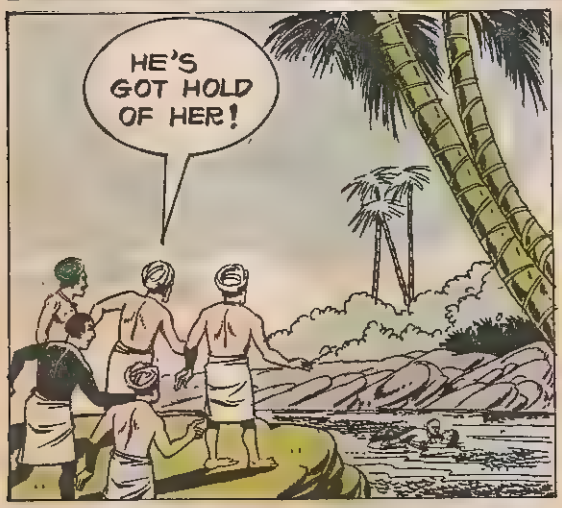
OH, GOD!

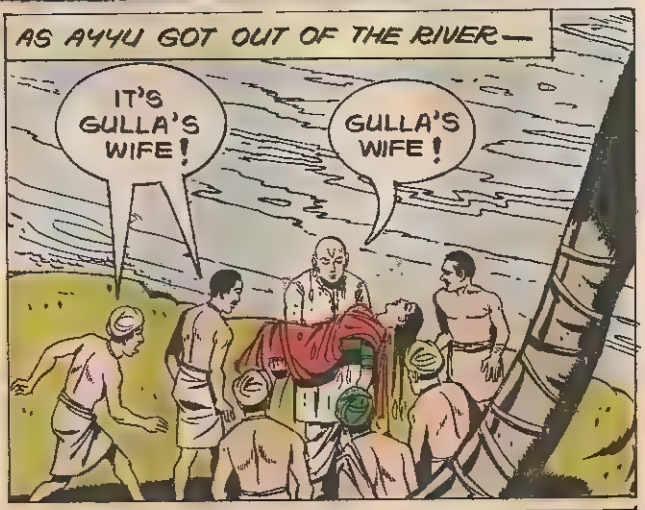
THE SAHUKAR HAS A REVOLVER... MY HUSBAND HAS A SICKLE...

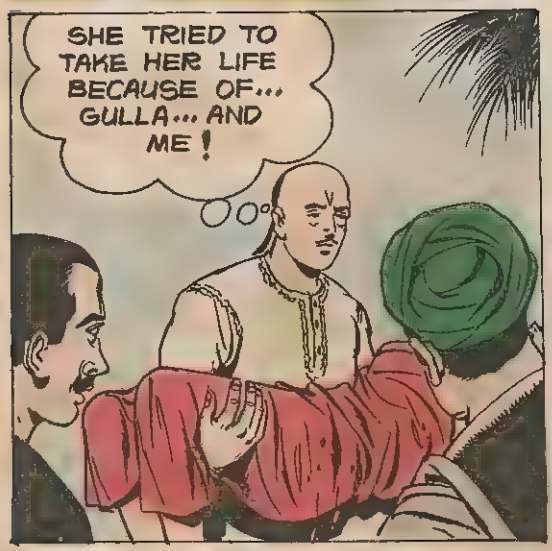
SOMETIME LATER AS AYYU WAS WALKING BY THE RIVERSIDE—

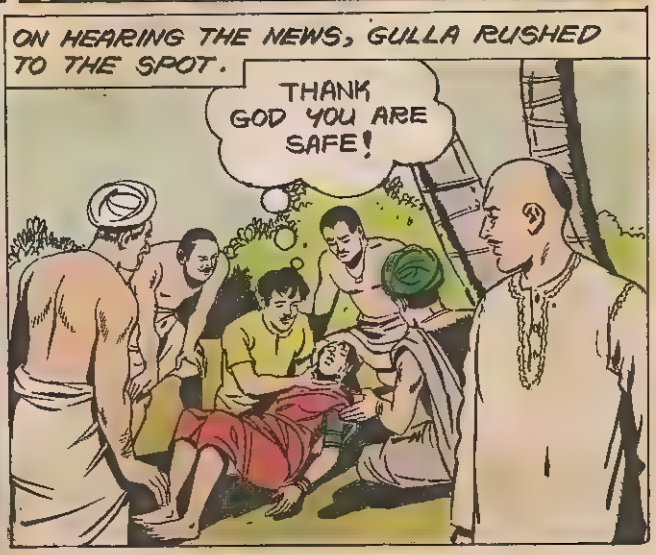
SOMEONE'S FALLEN INTO THE RIVER.


LOOK! AYYU IS TRYING TO SAVE HER!

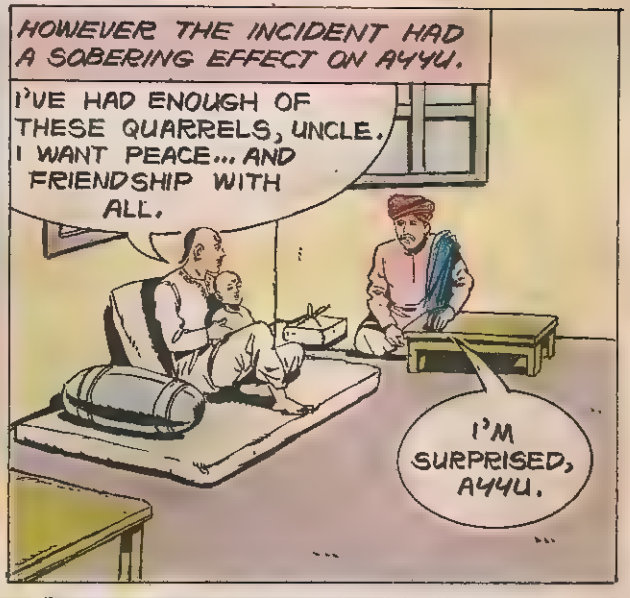

HE'S GOT HOLD OF HER!

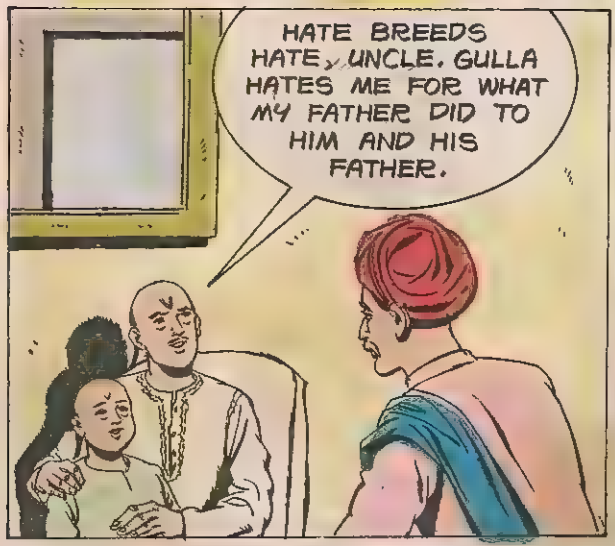

AS AYYU GOT OUT OF THE RIVER—
IT'S GULLA'S WIFE!
GULLA'S WIFE!

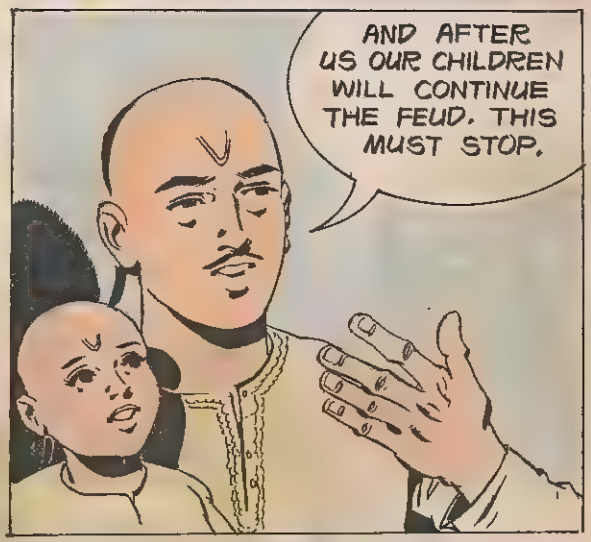

SHE TRIED TO TAKE HER LIFE BECAUSE OF... GULLA... AND ME!

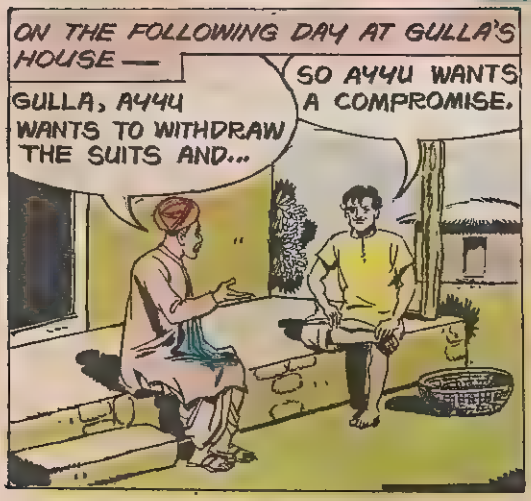

ON HEARING THE NEWS, GULLA RUSHED TO THE SPOT.
THANK GOD YOU ARE SAFE!

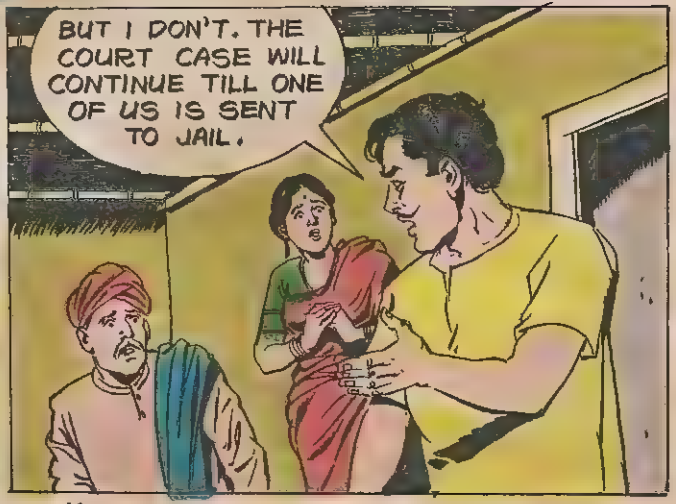
BUT IF ONLY... IF ONLY IT HADN'T BEEN THAT VILLAIN WHO SAVED YOU!


HOWEVER THE INCIDENT HAD A SOBERING EFFECT ON AYYU.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THESE QUARRELS, UNCLE. I WANT PEACE... AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL.
I'M SURPRISED, AYYU.


HATE BREEDS HATE, UNCLE. GULLA HATES ME FOR WHAT MY FATHER DID TO HIM AND HIS FATHER.

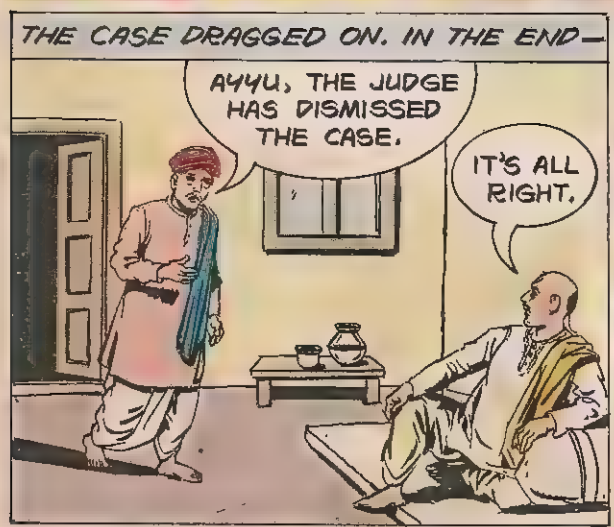

AND AFTER US OUR CHILDREN WILL CONTINUE THE FEUD. THIS MUST STOP.

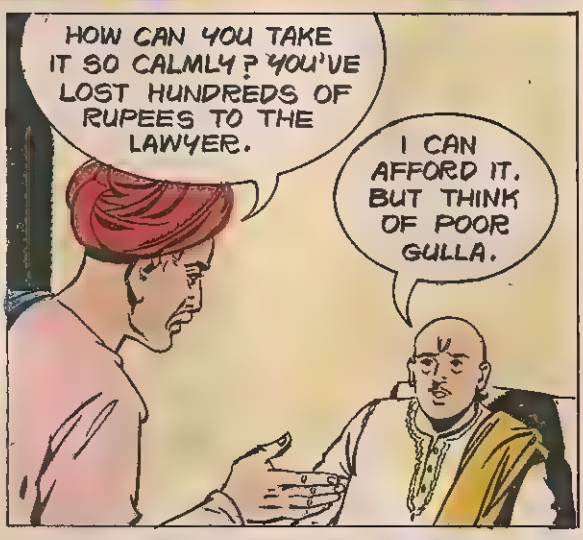

ON THE FOLLOWING DAY AT GULLA'S HOUSE —
GULLA, AYYU WANTS TO WITHDRAW THE SUITS AND...
SO AYYU WANTS A COMPROMISE.

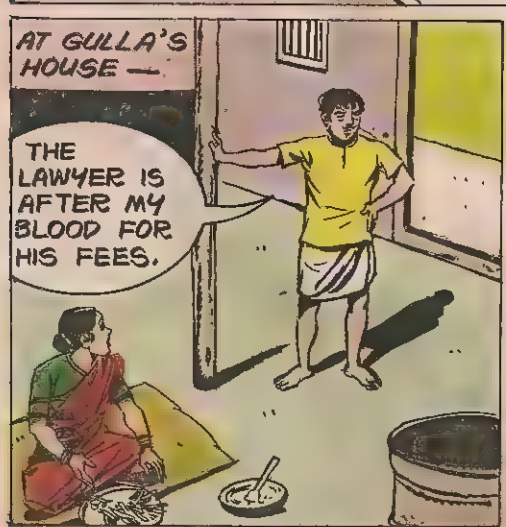

BUT I DON'T. THE COURT CASE WILL CONTINUE TILL ONE OF US IS SENT TO JAIL.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TURNED DOWN THE...
BE QUIET! I DON'T NEED YOUR ADVICE.

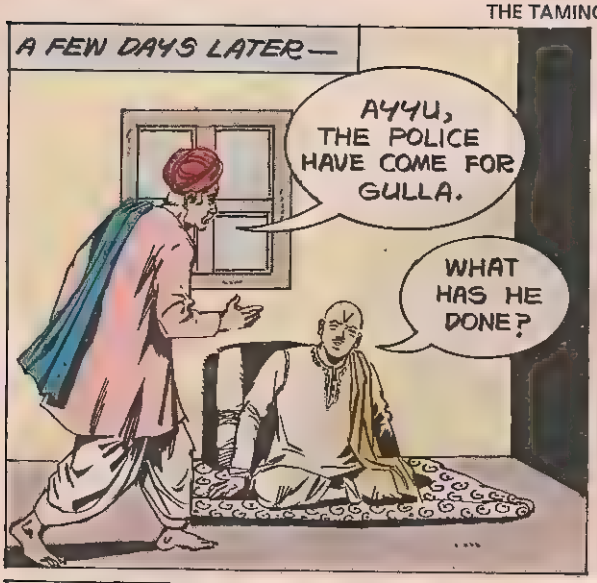
ALL YOU KNOW IS HOW TO JUMP INTO RIVERS.

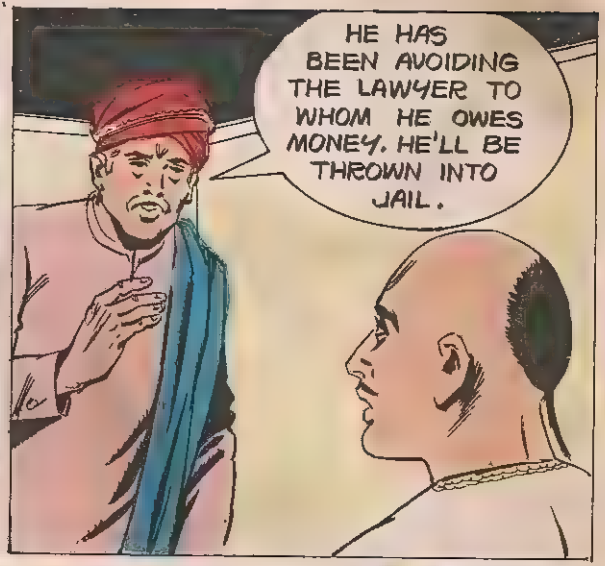

THE CASE DRAGGED ON. IN THE END—
AYYU, THE JUDGE HAS DISMISSED THE CASE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.

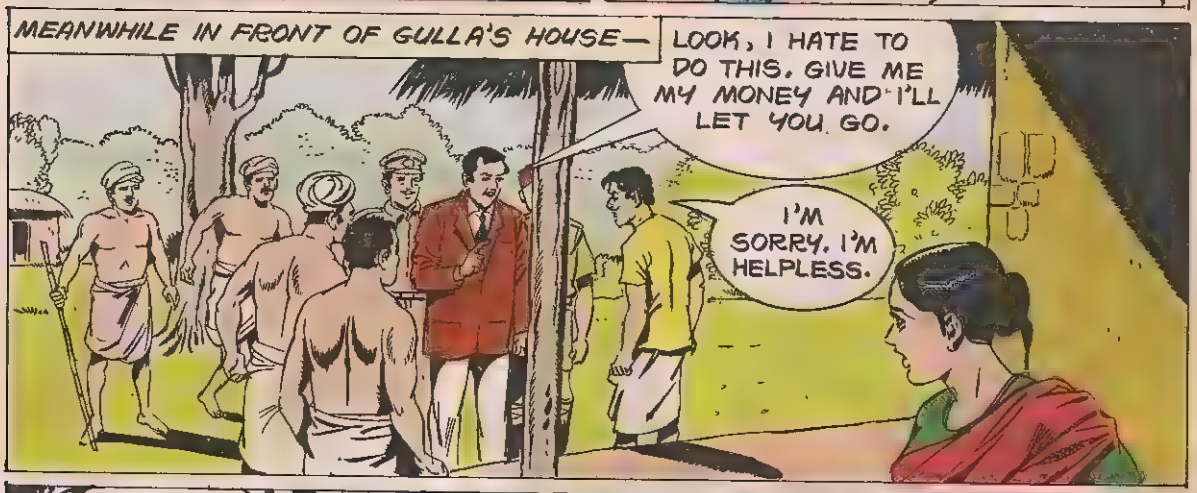

HOW CAN YOU TAKE IT SO CALMLY? YOU'VE LOST HUNDREDS OF RUPEES TO THE LAWYER.
I CAN AFFORD IT. BUT THINK OF POOR GULLA.


AT GULLA'S HOUSE —
THE LAWYER IS AFTER MY BLOOD FOR HIS FEES.

IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF THAT DEVIL, AYYU.


A FEW DAYS LATER—
AYYU, THE POLICE HAVE COME FOR GULLA.
WHAT HAS HE DONE?


HE HAS BEEN AVOIDING THE LAWYER TO WHOM HE OWES MONEY. HE'LL BE THROWN INTO JAIL.

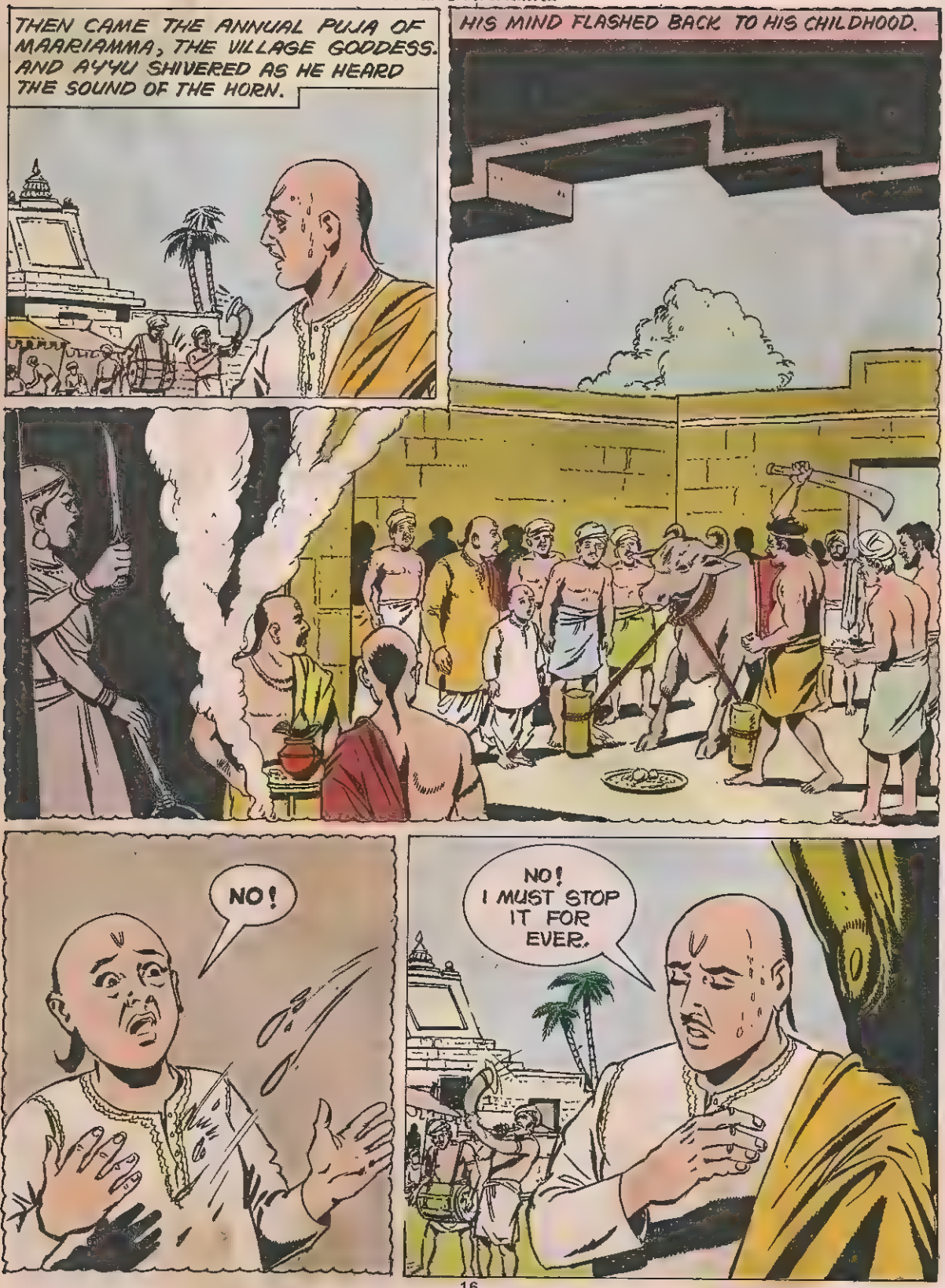

MEANWHILE IN FRONT OF GULLA'S HOUSE—
LOOK, I HATE TO DO THIS. GIVE ME MY MONEY AND I'LL LET YOU GO.
I'M SORRY. I'M HELPLESS.

THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO GO TO JAIL.
NO. HE WON'T.

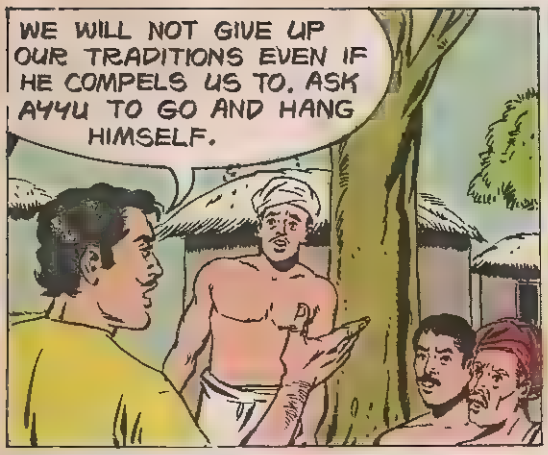
YOU!

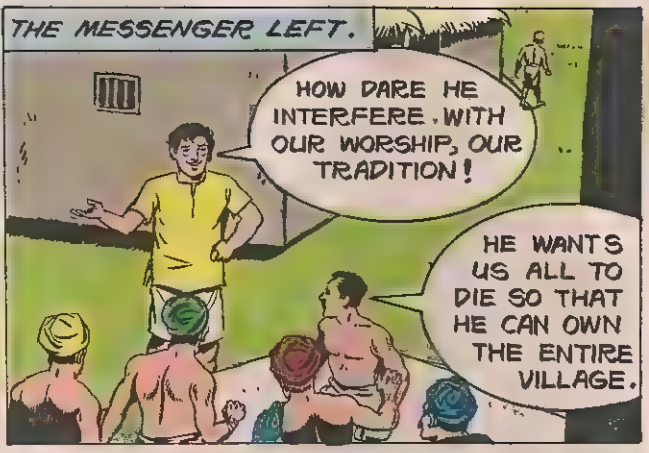
AYYU IGNORED GULLA AND TURNED TO THE LAWYER.
HERE IS YOUR MONEY.
NO!
DON'T TAKE THE MONEY FROM HIM.
I DON'T CARE WHO PAYS THE MONEY— AS LONG AS I'M PAID. THANK YOU, SIR.
THEN AYYU TURNED TO GULLA.
I KNOW HOW YOU HATE RECEIVING HELP FROM ME.
BUT I'VE NOT GIVEN THE MONEY AS ALMS. I'VE GIVEN IT AS A LOAN.
WORK FOR ME AND I'LL ADJUST YOUR SALARY AGAINST THE LOAN.
ALL RIGHT.

GULLA BEGAN TO WORK FOR AYYU.
I'VE NEVER SEEN A MAN LIKE GULLA — A MAN AS HARDWORKING AND HONEST.
HE WORKS AS THOUGH HE IS POSSESSED.
A FEW MONTHS LATER —
GULLA, YOU HAVE CLEARED OFF YOUR DEBT TODAY.
ARE YOU SURE? I DON'T WANT ANY CHARITY FROM YOU.
I AM SURE. I'D NEED FOUR MEN TO DO THE WORK YOU HAVE DONE SINGLE-HANDED.
LET'S BE FRIENDS, GULLA. I....
NO!
WE CAN NEVER BE FRIENDS, AYYU.
AND GULLA WALKED AWAY.

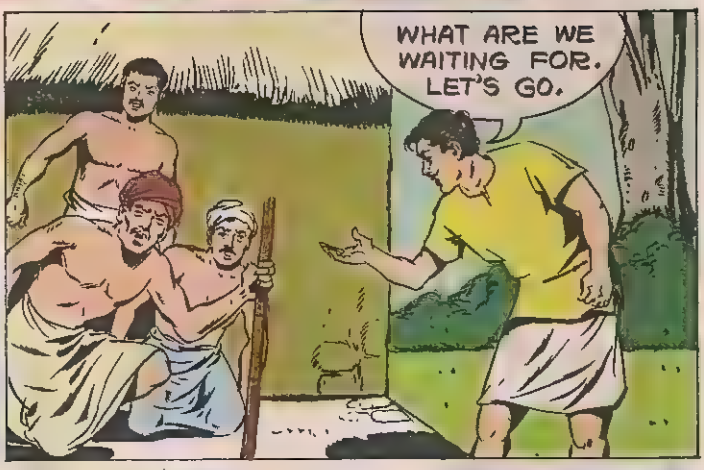

THEN CAME THE ANNUAL PUJA OF MAARIAMMA, THE VILLAGE GODDESS. AND AYYU SHIVERED AS HE HEARD THE SOUND OF THE HORN.
HIS MIND FLASHED BACK TO HIS CHILDHOOD.
NO!
NO! I MUST STOP IT FOR EVER.

MEANWHILE ALL THE VILLAGERS HAD ASSEMBLED TO DISCUSS THE PUJA TO BE PERFORMED AT THE TEMPLE.
TIMMA HAS OFFERED A BUFFALO.
IT'S THE FATTEST ANIMAL I'VE EVER SEEN.
JUST THEN A MESSENGER CAME FROM AYYU'S HOUSE.
I COME WITH A REQUEST FROM THE SAHUKAR.
HE WANTS YOU TO GIVE UP SLAUGHTERING ANIMALS AT THE PUJA.
WHAT!
HOW COULD THE SAHUKAR MAKE SUCH A REQUEST?
AYYU HAS HIMSELF OFFERED ME THE ROPE TO HANG HIM WITH.
WE WILL INCUR THE WRATH OF MAARIAMMA IF WE LISTEN TO AYYU.
YES. WE'LL DIE OF PLAGUE.
THAT OF COURSE WOULDN'T BOTHER AYYU. AFTER ALL IT IS ONLY WE, THE POOR, WHO WILL DIE OF PLAGUE.

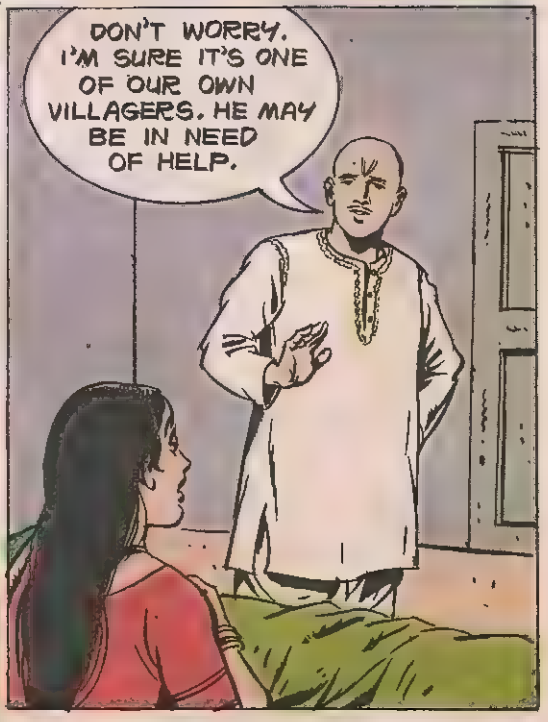

WE WILL NOT GIVE UP OUR TRADITIONS EVEN IF HE COMPELS US TO. ASK AYYU TO GO AND HANG HIMSELF.


THE MESSENGER LEFT.
HOW DARE HE INTERFERE WITH OUR WORSHIP, OUR TRADITION!
HE WANTS US ALL TO DIE SO THAT HE CAN OWN THE ENTIRE VILLAGE.

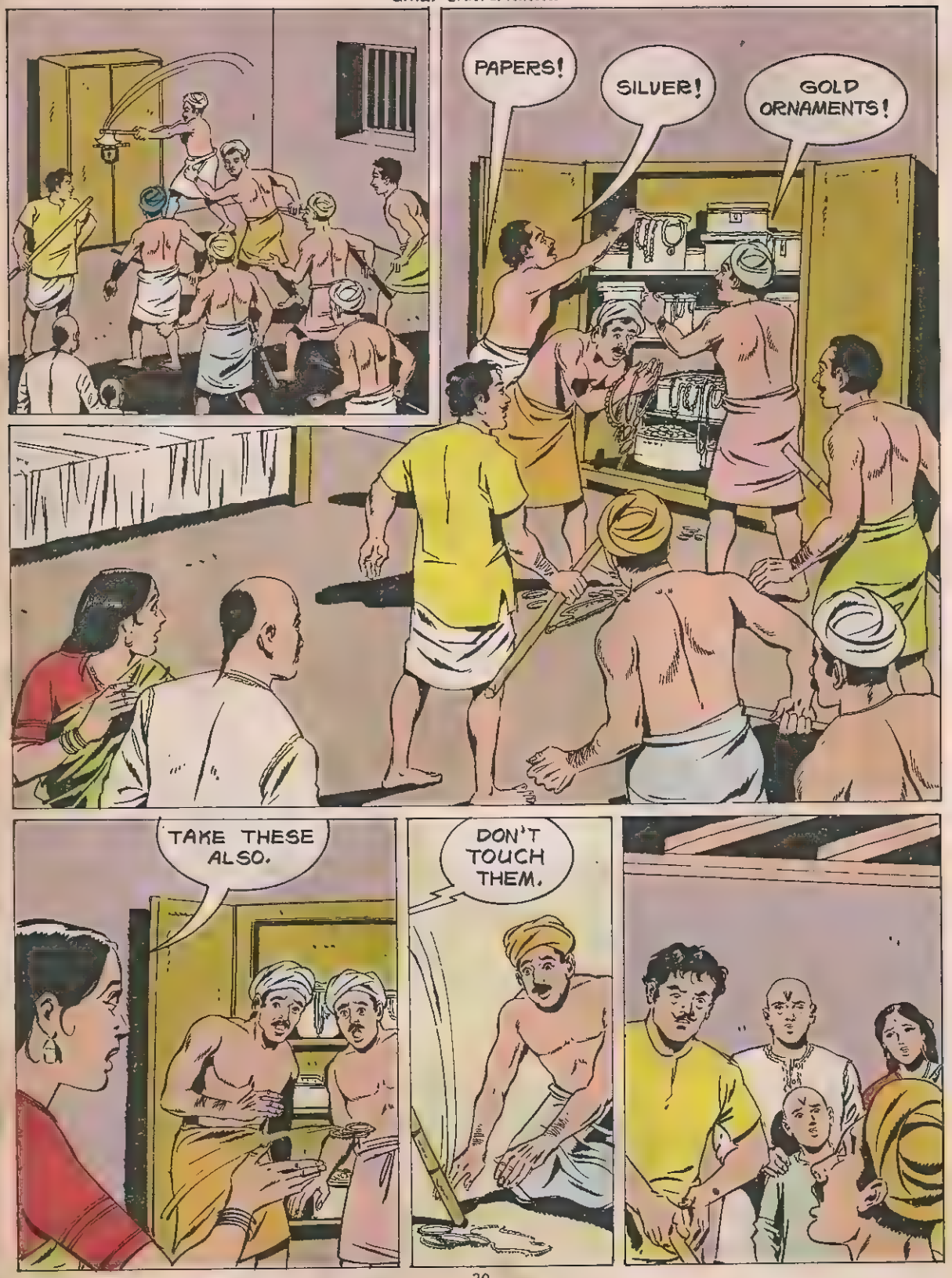
WE'VE GOT TO TEACH HIM A LESSON— RIGHT NOW. MAARIAMMA WILL BE PLEASED.

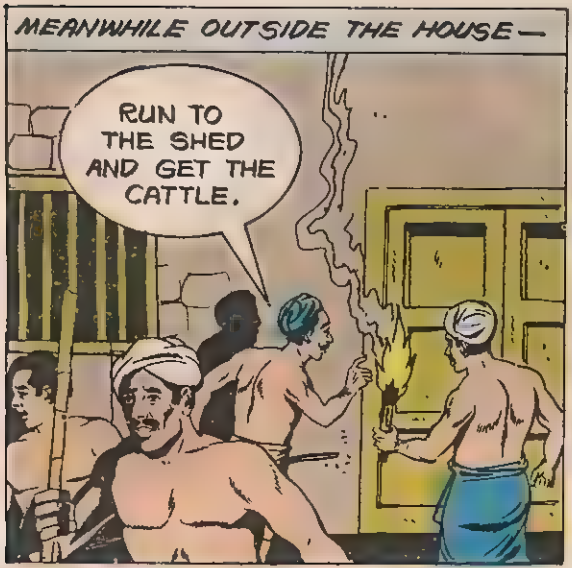

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR. LET'S GO.

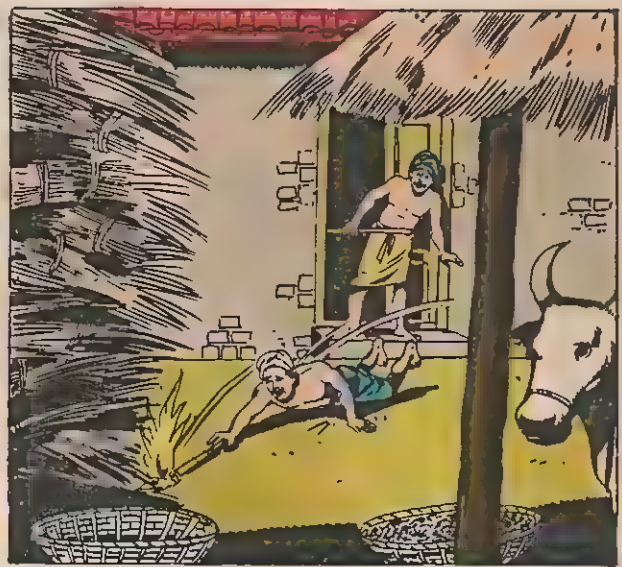
SOMETIME LATER, AT AYYU'S HOUSE—
KNOCK
KNOCK
WHY SHOULD ANYONE COME HERE AT THIS HOUR? PLEASE DON'T OPEN THE DOOR. PLEASE...


DON'T WORRY. I'M SURE IT'S ONE OF OUR OWN VILLAGERS. HE MAY BE IN NEED OF HELP.

AYYU OPENED THE DOOR.
GULLA AND HE STARED AT EACH OTHER. NEITHER WAS WILLING TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.
AYYU HAS A REVOLVER! ALL THESE SHEEP WILL RUN AWAY NOW.
THERE ARE FIVE BULLETS. I COULD KILL FIVE. THEN WHAT? WILL I BE THE SIXTH VICTIM?
WHY SIX CORPSES? LET THERE BE ONLY ONE — MINE.
COME ON. LET'S GO IN.


PAPERS!
SILVER!
GOLD ORNAMENTS!
TAKE THESE ALSO.
DON'T TOUCH THEM.

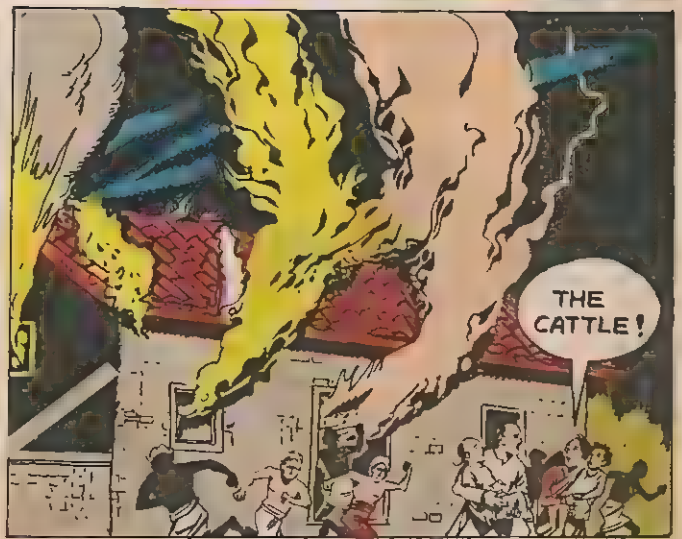

MEANWHILE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE—
RUN TO THE SHED AND GET THE CATTLE.



FIRE! FIRE!

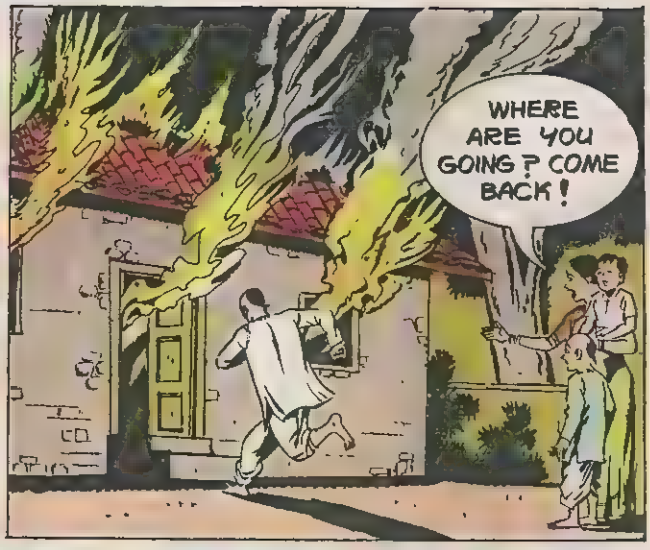
RUN! FIRE!

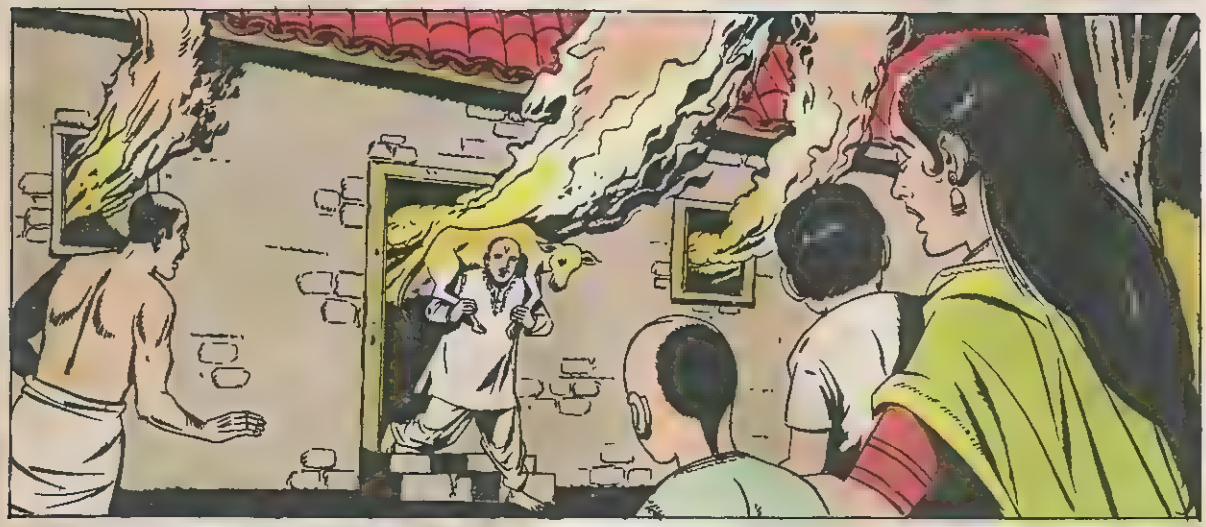
FIRE! OH, GOD!
APPA*...
LET'S GET OUT FIRST.

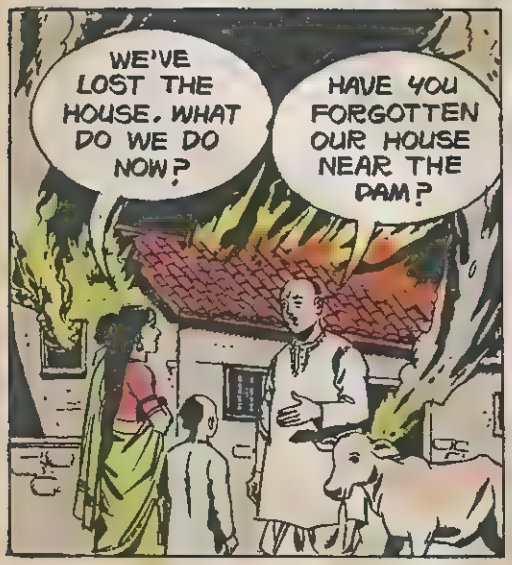

THE CATTLE!

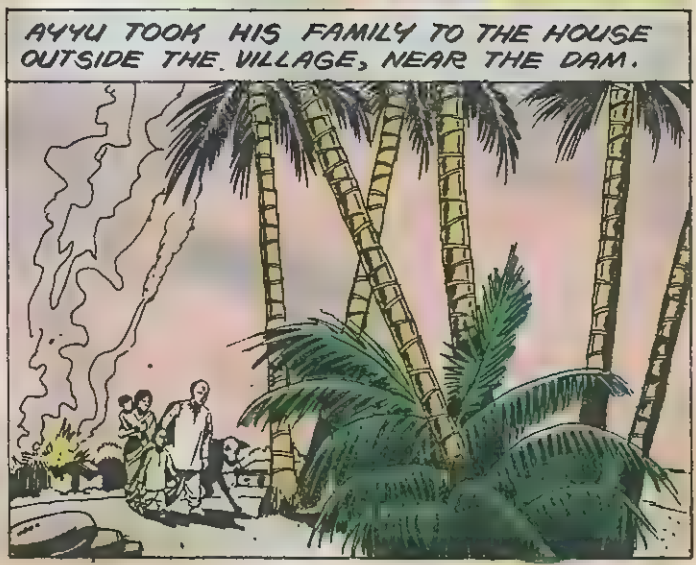
*FATHER

WAIT HERE! I'LL BE BACK IN A MINUTE.


WHERE ARE YOU GOING? COME BACK!

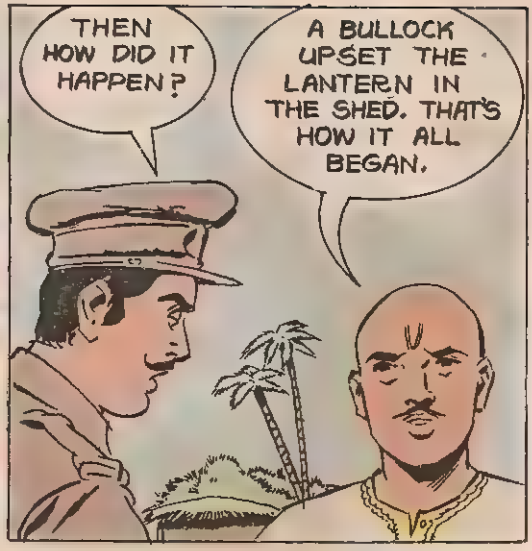



WE'VE LOST THE HOUSE. WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN OUR HOUSE NEAR THE DAM?

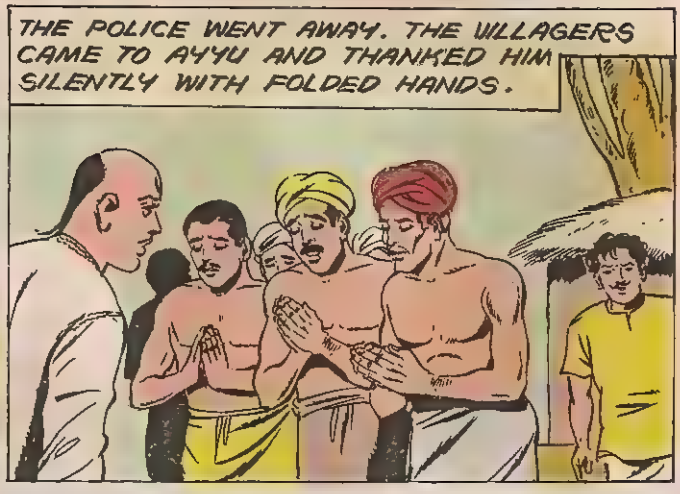

AYYU TOOK HIS FAMILY TO THE HOUSE OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE, NEAR THE DAM.

ALTHOUGH AYYU DID NOT LODGE ANY COMPLAINT, THE NEWS REACHED THE DISTRICT POLICE. THEY CAME TO JALAHALLI.
SPEAK UP! WHO SET AYYU'S HOUSE ON FIRE?
ARE YOU DEAF? OR ARE YOU MUTE? SPEAK UP!
THE INSPECTOR SENT FOR AYYU.
SHOW US THE CULPRIT, SIR. IDENTIFY THE RASCAL WHO SET YOUR HOUSE ON FIRE.
AYYU LOOKED AT THE VILLAGERS.
THIS THEN IS THE END.
AYYU WILL SEND US TO JAIL.
DON'T HESITATE, SIR. NAME THE CULPRITS.
INSPECTOR, WHY ARE YOU HOLDING THESE PEOPLE?
?

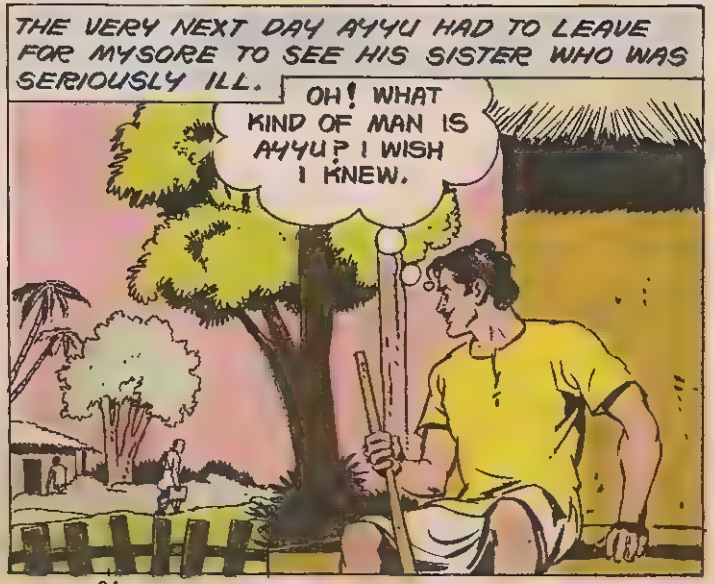
NO ONE SET OUR HOUSE ON FIRE, INSPECTOR.
WHAT!
!
?

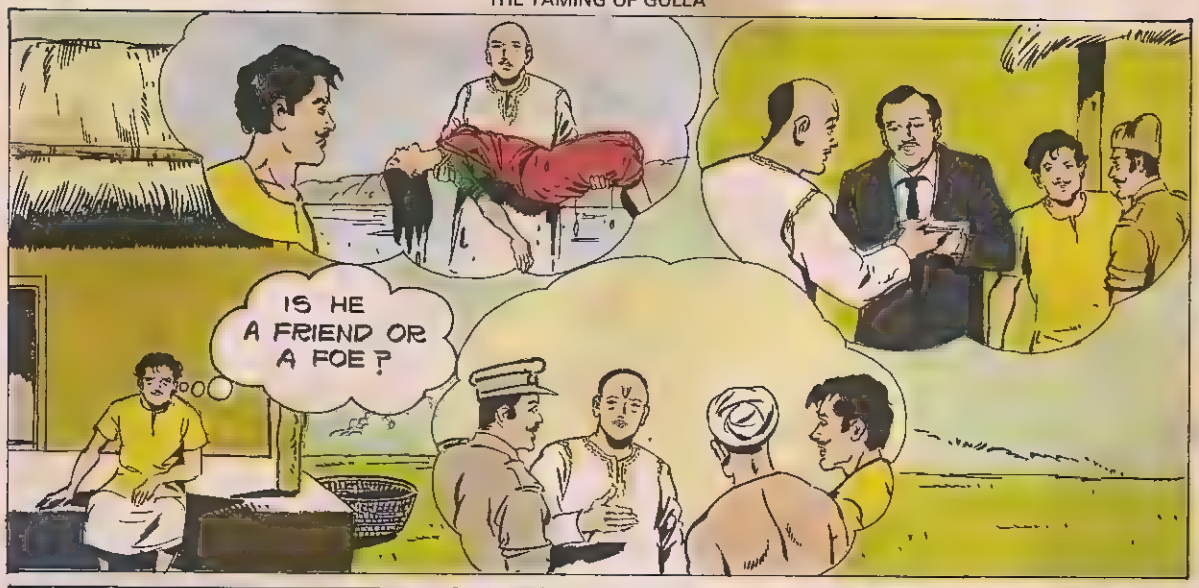

THEN HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
A BULLOCK UPSET THE LANTERN IN THE SHED. THAT'S HOW IT ALL BEGAN.

PLEASE SET THESE VILLAGERS FREE. THEY ARE INNOCENT.

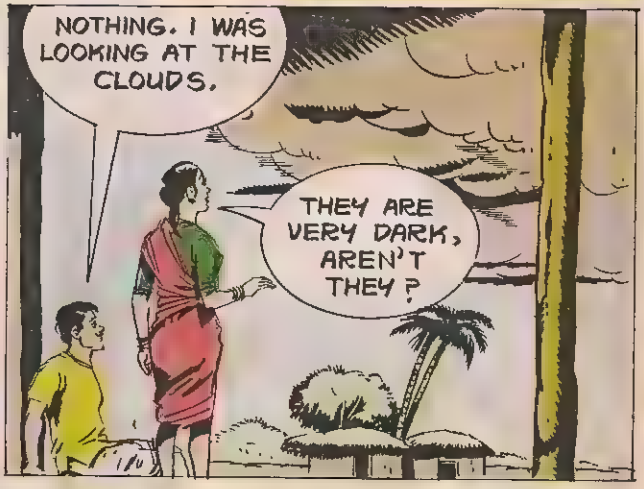

THE POLICE WENT AWAY. THE VILLAGERS CAME TO AYYU AND THANKED HIM SILENTLY WITH FOLDED HANDS.

AYYU LEFT WITHOUT A WORD.
HAVE I MISUNDERSTOOD HIM? I DON'T KNOW... I DON'T KNOW...

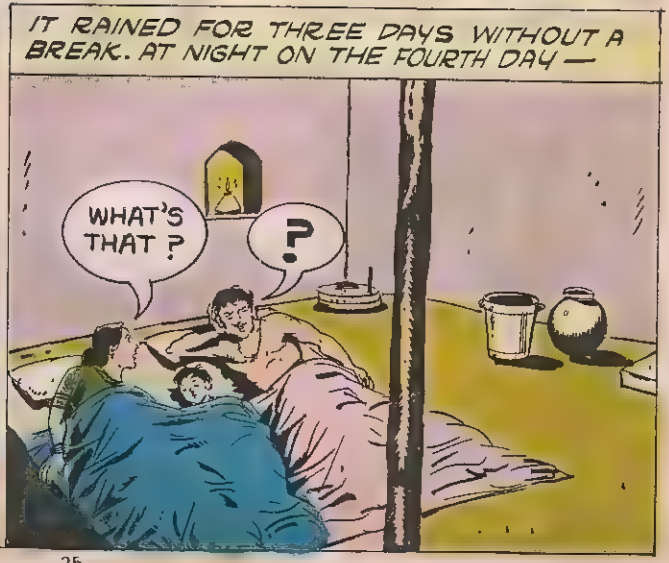

THE VERY NEXT DAY AYYU HAD TO LEAVE FOR MYSORE TO SEE HIS SISTER WHO WAS SERIOUSLY ILL.
OH! WHAT KIND OF MAN IS AYYU? I WISH I KNEW.

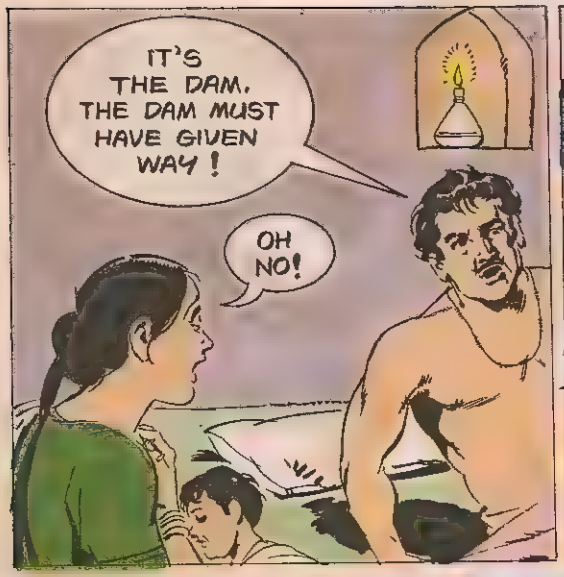

IS HE A FRIEND OR A FOE ?

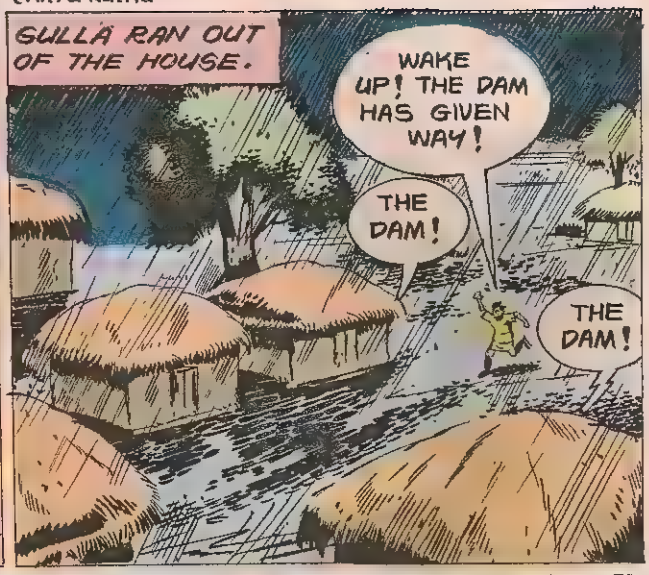
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF ?
OH...!

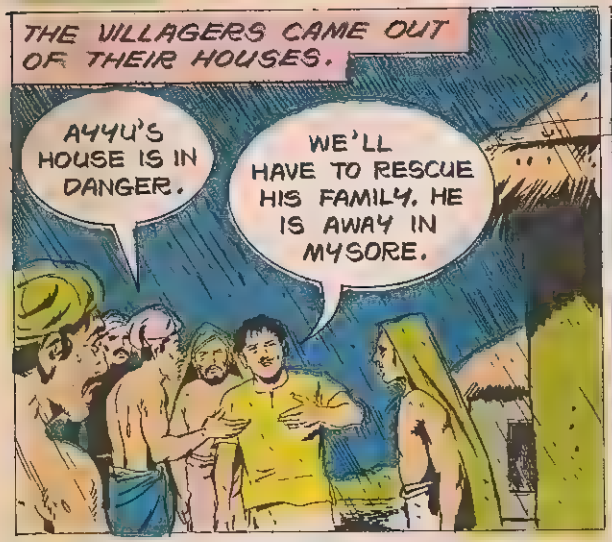

NOTHING. I WAS LOOKING AT THE CLOUDS.
THEY ARE VERY DARK, AREN'T THEY ?

THE NEXT MOMENT IT BEGAN TO RAIN.

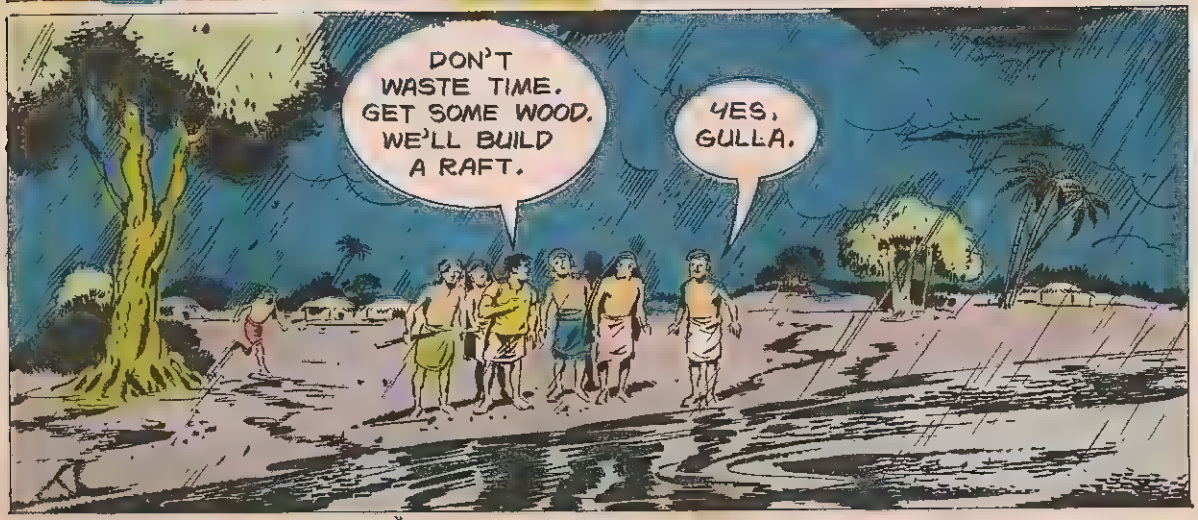

IT RAINED FOR THREE DAYS WITHOUT A BREAK. AT NIGHT ON THE FOURTH DAY —
WHAT'S THAT ?
?

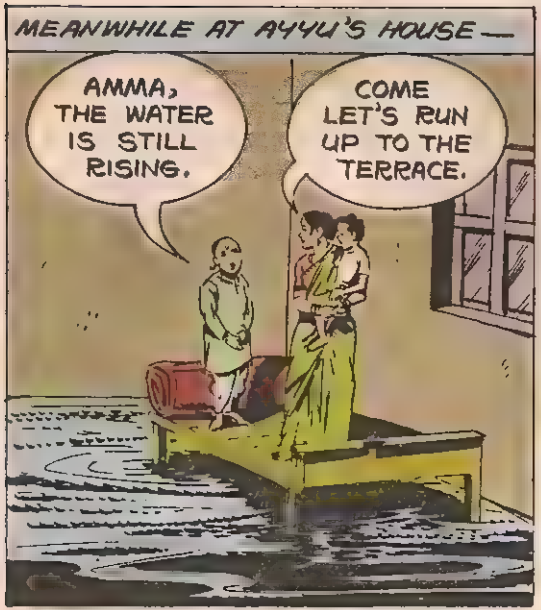

IT'S THE DAM. THE DAM MUST HAVE GIVEN WAY!
OH NO!

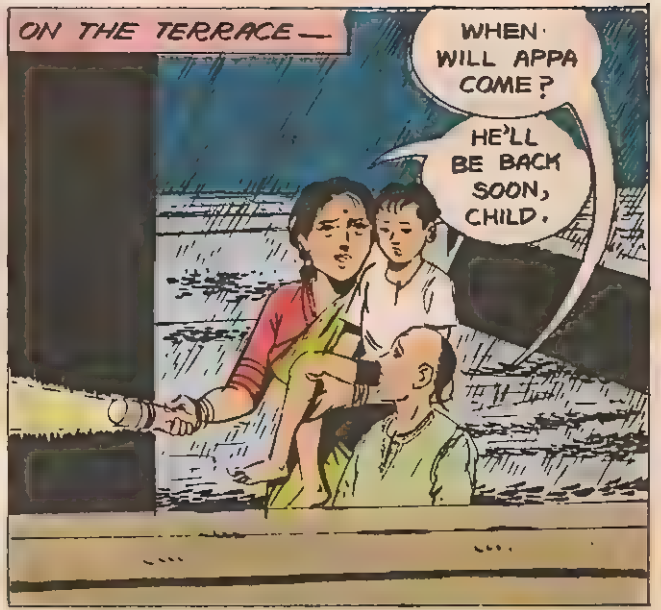

GULLA RAN OUT OF THE HOUSE.
WAKE UP! THE DAM HAS GIVEN WAY!
THE DAM!
THE DAM!

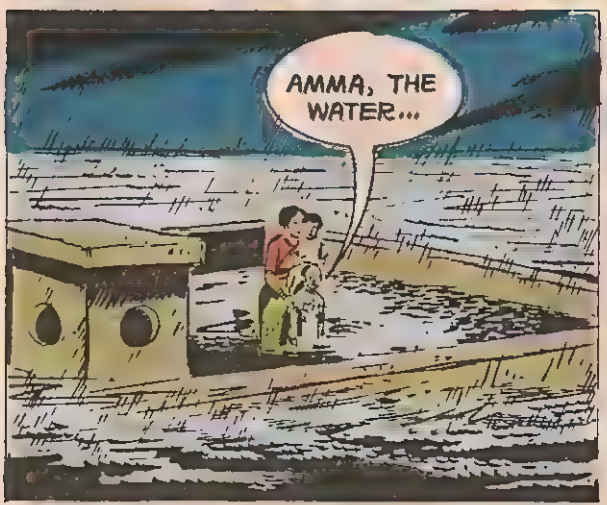

THE VILLAGERS CAME OUT OF THEIR HOUSES.
AYYU'S HOUSE IS IN DANGER.
WE'LL HAVE TO RESCUE HIS FAMILY. HE IS AWAY IN MYSORE.

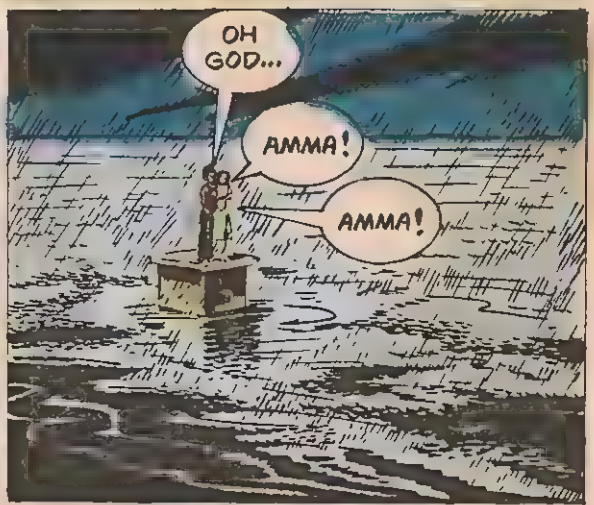
THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE DAM!
I CAN'T SEE AYYU'S HOUSE EITHER.

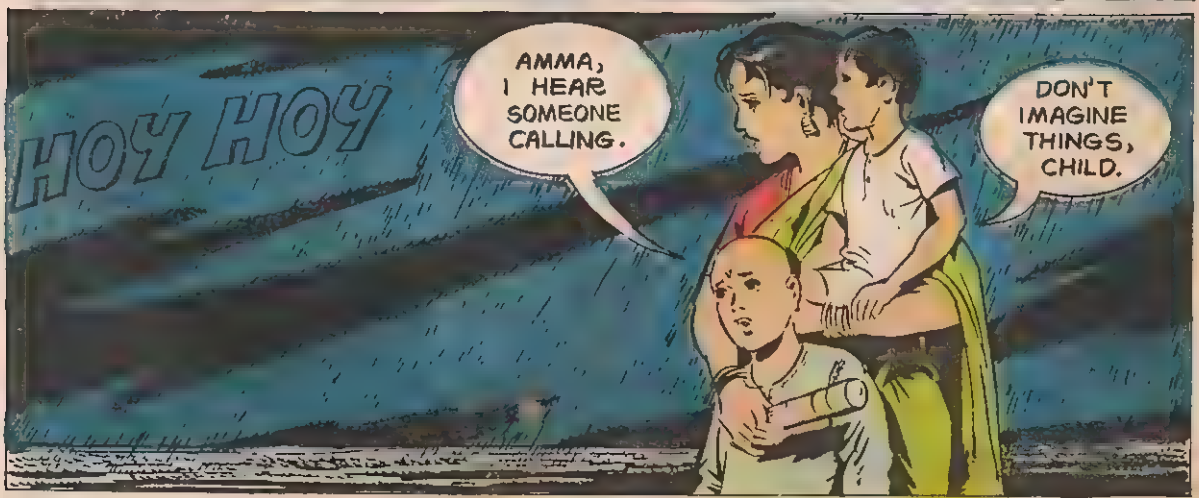

DON'T WASTE TIME. GET SOME WOOD. WE'LL BUILD A RAFT.
YES, GULLA.


MEANWHILE AT AYYU'S HOUSE —
AMMA, THE WATER IS STILL RISING.
COME LET'S RUN UP TO THE TERRACE.

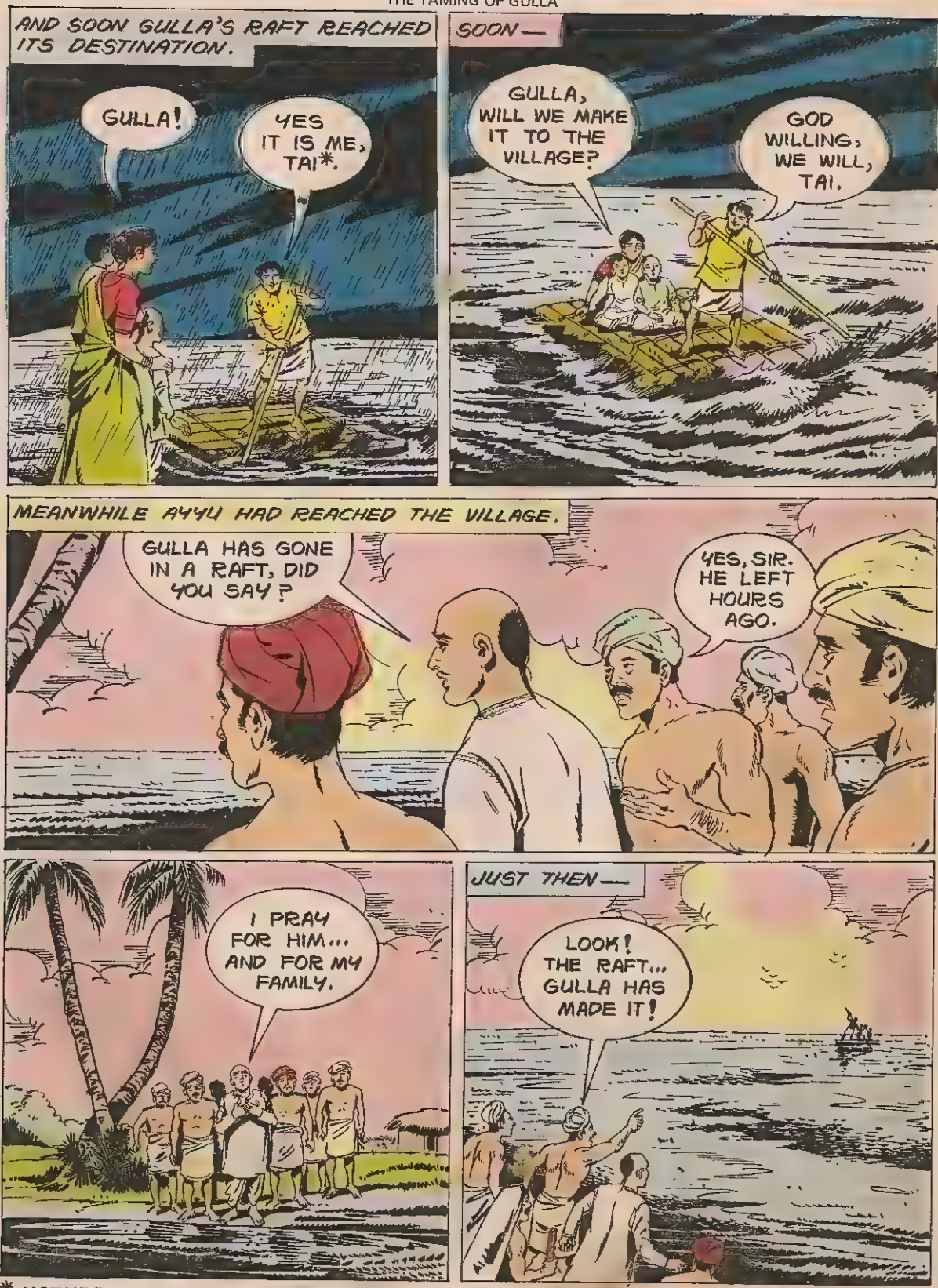

ON THE TERRACE —
WHEN WILL APPA COME?
HE'LL BE BACK SOON, CHILD.


AMMA, THE WATER...

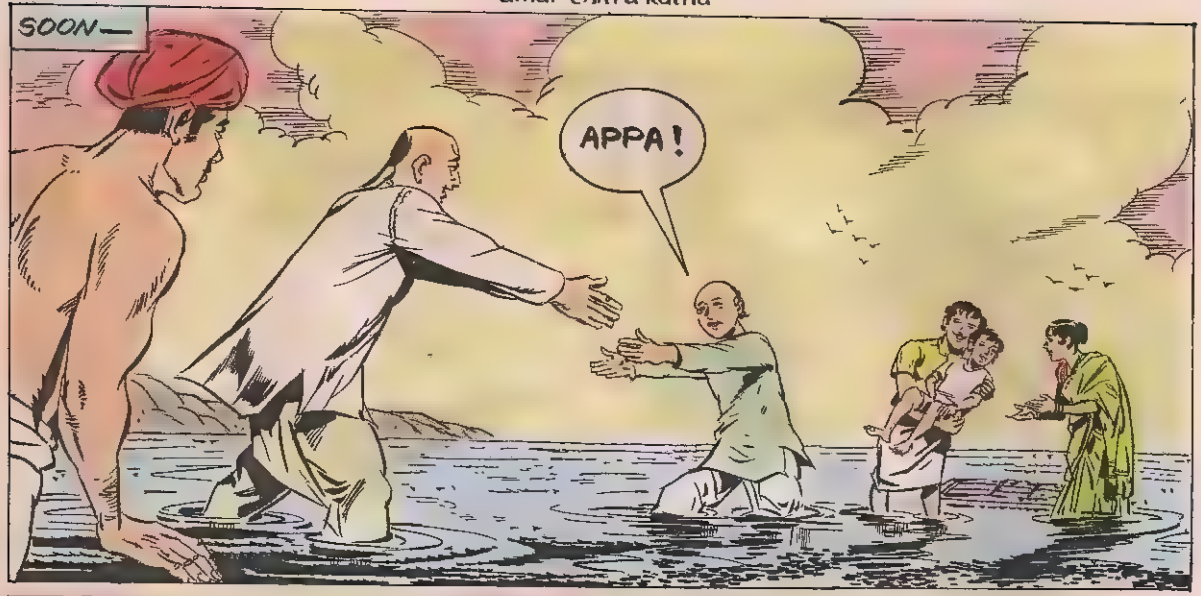

OH GOD...
AMMA!
AMMA!

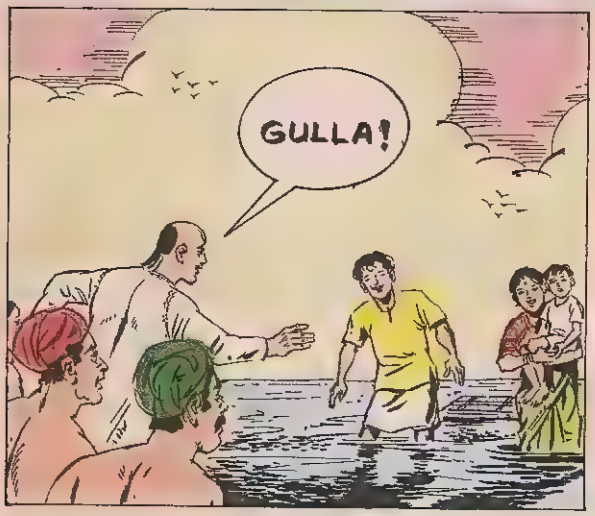

HOY HOY
AMMA, I HEAR SOMEONE CALLING.
DON'T IMAGINE THINGS, CHILD.

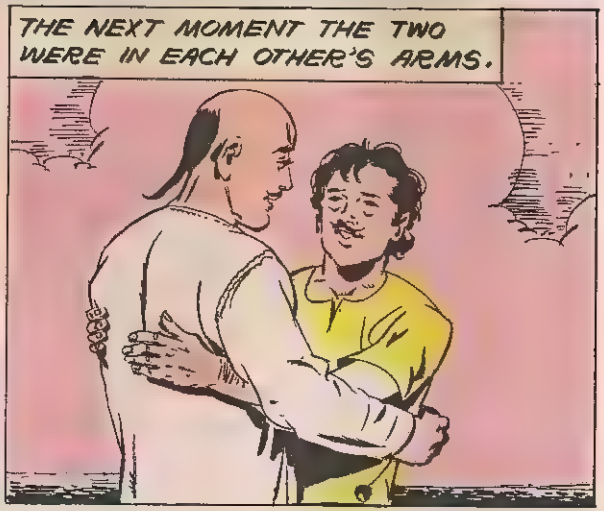
MEANWHILE, GULLA WAS DESPERATELY TRYING TO KEEP HIS RAFT STEADY ON THE SWIRLING WATERS.
IT'S SO DARK. I CAN'T SEE A THING.
HOY HOY HOY HOY HOY HOY HOY HOY HOY
ON THE TERRACE—
YOU'RE RIGHT, SON. SOMEONE IS CALLING.
AYYU'S WIFE SHOUTED AT THE TOP OF HER VOICE.
HOY HOY HO
SHE FLASHED THE TORCH.
A LIGHT!

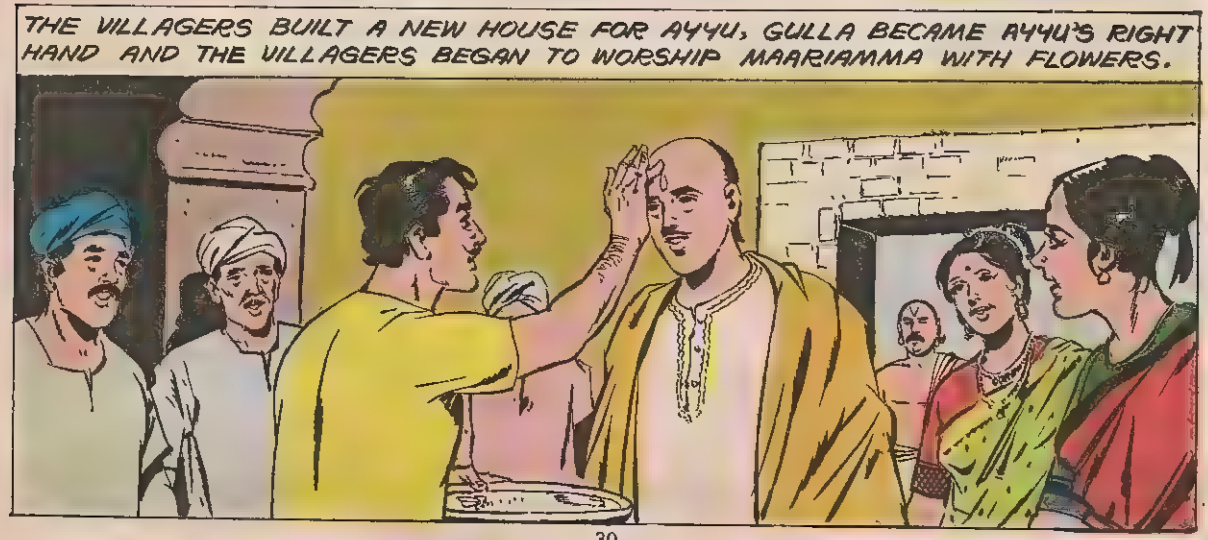

AND SOON GULLA'S RAFT REACHED ITS DESTINATION.
GULLA!
YES IT IS ME, TAI*.
SOON—
GULLA, WILL WE MAKE IT TO THE VILLAGE?
GOD WILLING, WE WILL, TAI.
MEANWHILE AYYU HAD REACHED THE VILLAGE.
GULLA HAS GONE IN A RAFT, DID YOU SAY?
YES, SIR. HE LEFT HOURS AGO.
I PRAY FOR HIM... AND FOR MY FAMILY.
JUST THEN—
LOOK! THE RAFT... GULLA HAS MADE IT!

* MOTHER


SOON—
APPA!


GULLA!


THE NEXT MOMENT THE TWO WERE IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS.


THE VILLAGERS BUILT A NEW HOUSE FOR AYYU, GULLA BECAME AYYU'S RIGHT HAND AND THE VILLAGERS BEGAN TO WORSHIP MAARIAMMA WITH FLOWERS.

"All aboard, all aboard
My engine's on its way
We'll take Gems across the land
We'll have fun every day!"

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TINKLE

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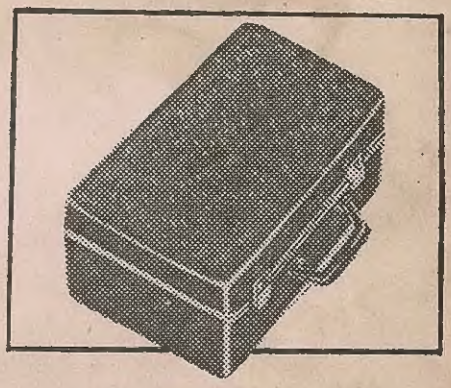

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